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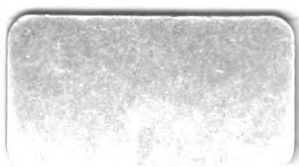
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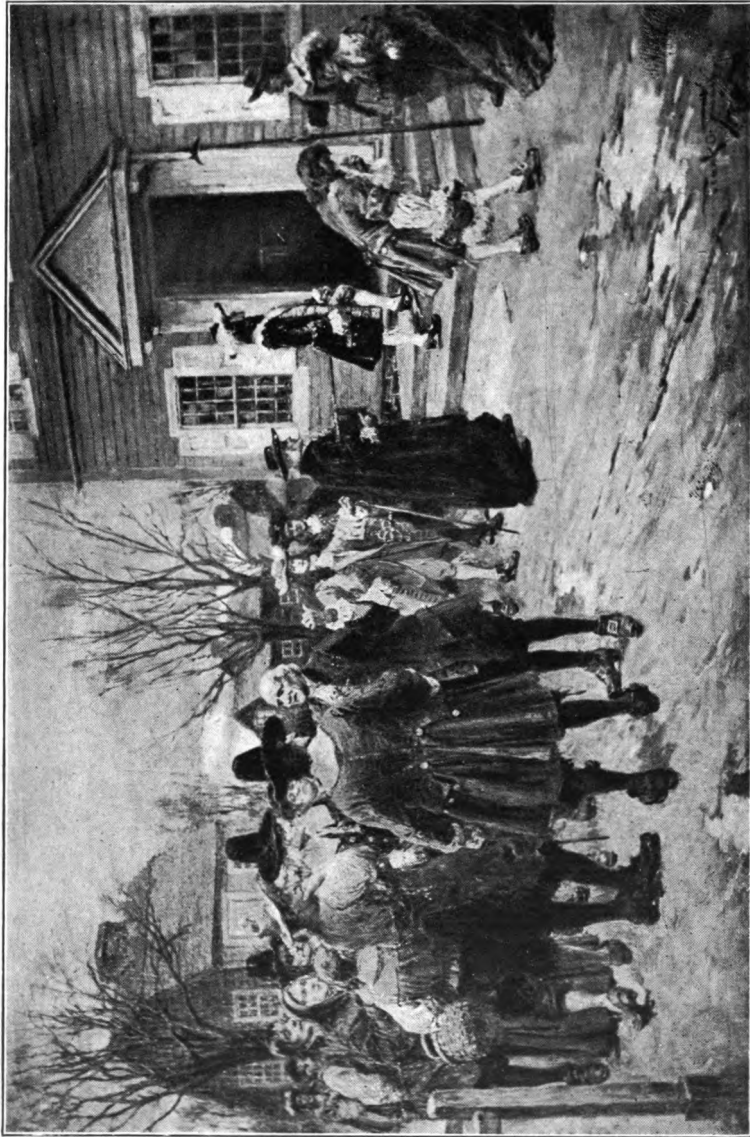
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GOV. ANDROS TAKING POSSESSION OF THE "SOUTH CHURCH."

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THE
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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

IN THE

FIRST BOSTON TOWN HOUSE

BY

REV. HENRY W. FOOTE



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

IN THE

FIRST BOSTON TOWN HOUSE.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER,
OLD STATE HOUSE, MARCH 14, 1882, BY THE

REV. HENRY W. FOOTE.



AM to speak of one of the most picturesque and dramatic incidents in the earlier history of Boston. One cannot but regret that the building with which the events which I have to describe are associated — Boston's First Town House — has not survived to us, even though the Old State House, as we know it, continues its traditions, and is its monument upon the spot which for a century and a half of the life of the town was the centre and heart whence everything pulsated.

It illustrates the fixity of conditions in the Old World, as compared with the New, and shows how much more tenderly time and the hand of man have spared such

ancient memorials, when we think of some one of the old Free Cities of Germany, like Bremen, for example, which preserves its venerable Rath-haus as its glory and pride. That picturesque building stands, stately and beautiful, with rich façade and gable, exactly as it stood when the Great Emigration sailed from Southampton in the *Arbella* and her consorts, — substantially the same as it stood when Columbus was born. The stone Roland bearing sword and shield, and with the head and hand of a criminal lying at his feet, typifying the jurisdiction of a Free City, stares as blankly into space as he did four hundred and fifty years ago, unconscious of the whole New World which has risen out of the void.

Could such an enduring shrine have been left to us by the fathers, we should all agree that neither Gothic roof nor front of carven stone ennobled it above its proper worth, as the centre not merely of a town history, but of the formative and crystallizing period of a great people; and our Roland would typify not merely the commercial freedom of a city, but the imperial freedom of a nation.

And yet, to the discerning eye, that primitive Town House had in its very homeliness and simplicity a truer fitness to the people who had built it and whose convenience it served, than the stateliest edifice of Old World fame. As you stand at Salem in the little building of the First Church whose rude frame-work, rescued

a few years ago from the barn in whose disguise it had been securely hidden for nearly two centuries, and seem to hear those rough timbers, just squared by the broad axe, echo the tones of Hugh Peter and Roger Williams, you feel that you are veritably in one of the *incunabula gentium*, — the place where a nation was cradled.

So might you feel, in a measure, also, if you were to be landing with Edward Randolph and his wife, in December, 1681, at this town of less than two thousand houses and eight thousand people, a third of them men trained to arms. The three hills capped by a beacon, a windmill, and a fort; the houses clustered beneath them, close along the shore and further back scattered among gardens; the busy "Fairs," such as Josselyn¹ saw them, and "on the South . . . a small but pleasant Common, where the Gallants a little before Sunfet walk with their *Marmalet-Madams* . . . till the nine a clock Bell rings them home to their respective habitations;"¹ are a pleasant picture after a long voyage. "The buildings of Boston," says the impudent Ned Ward, "like the women, are neat and handsome; their streets, like the hearts of the male inhabitants, paved with pebble."

Up such a rough-shod way, the broad main street, you hobble, and soon come to the Town House built with Capt. Robert Keayne's legacy, "upon pillars, where

¹ Josselyn's *Two Voyages* (Veazie's Reprint), p. 124.

the Merchants may confer"—a space only partially enclosed, while "in the Chambers above they keep their monethly Courts." With belfry and sun-dial and balcony and outside stair-case, and stocks and pillory under its shadow, this is evidently the centre and heart of the town.

A few steps away stands the Mother Church; and two main arteries stretch off, one to the northern ferry over the Charles, the other to the South "where the public gibbet creaked horribly in the wind, and the peninsula contracted to a narrow isthmus, over which passed the single great road from the metropolis. . . . Tributary streets and lanes, like rivulets, everywhere followed the natural conformation of the ground."

The people whose capitol this was, we can easily picture to ourselves from the abundant, though not over-friendly descriptions which have survived from the pens of not very sympathetic visitors to this distant shore. Indeed, I cannot but think that we, their descendants, have enough of them surviving in us to make it easier, one would think, than it sometimes seems to be, to reproduce their likeness out of our own consciousness. That saucy Ward whom I have quoted above, says:—"They keep no saints' days, nor will they allow the Apostles to be saints; yet they assume that sacred dignity to themselves, and say, in the title-page of their Psalm Book, 'Printed for the edification of the Saints in Old and New England.'"

A fixed and resolute race,—the English iron tempered to steel by the struggle with the untamed nature of the wilderness, the hardships of the first fifty years of life here before the climate was understood, the rugged world civilized and softened, the comforts of fireside and food fairly won. The law of “the survival of the fittest” had worked with all its merciless severity and left only the toughest in body and mind,—those who would not yield to the New England winter and were not likely to yield one jot beyond necessity to Old England’s dictation. A religious emigration, they carried in themselves the seeds of a sacred contentiousness which contained the germs, though long repressed, of the sects which have enriched our annals with more varieties of Protestantism than Bossuet included in his great work on that subject.

Already in the first generation, the vision of absolute religious unity was rudely dispelled by the sharp strifes evoked by Mrs. Hutchinson, the earliest representative of “Women’s Rights,” and Rhode Island was found a much-needed and salutary safety-valve for the explosive ecclesiastical elements. Roger Williams and Gorton were free, at that distance, to work out their theories, but could come no nearer to mar the peace of Israel. The second generation saw multiplying elements of discord; the Quaker, shrieking denunciations of the “Priests of Baal” in the steeple-houses, lashed at the cart’s-tail,

hung from the Boston Elm ;¹ the Baptist breaking the ice of strong hostility to administer the waters, his saving ordinance.

Nor was there perfect harmony within the bosom of the churches themselves. The Second Church, which was afterwards illuminated by the ministry of the Mathers, father, son and grandson, had indeed grown peacefully out of the First Church. But the Third, which we call the Old South, was the monument of a bitter strife,—the controversy which convulsed the whole Colony for years concerning the proper subjects for infant baptism.

On one point, however, the elements most mutually hostile were agreed, and that was, in their feeling of dislike and fear against the Church of England. Much as they might be opposed to each other, the widest fissure between them was not so deep but that it would close up solidly if the faintest tremor of that approaching earthquake shook the ground.

Randolph wrote to the Bishop of London in 1682 :
"There was a great difference between the old church

¹ In this remark the Rev. Mr. Foote evidently refers to the "Great Elm" on Boston Common, and follows a tradition generally accepted as a historic fact at the time this paper was read. But at the monthly meeting of the Society, held in the Old State House, May 17, 1910, Mr. Michael J. Canavan, in an exhaustive discussion of the story (printed in full in "Proceedings of the Bostonian Society, 1911," pp. 37-49), gave very strong evidence, apparently conclusive, showing that the tradition was not true, and explaining its probable origin. — ED.

and the members of the new church about baptisme and their members joyning in full communion with either church ; this was soe high that there was imprifoning of parties and great disturbances, but now, heereing of my propofals for minifters to be sent over they are now joyned together, about a fortnight ago, and pray to God to confound the devices of all who disturbe their peace and liberties."

Nor is this strange. The Episcopalian who wonders at it to-day is no more like the type which Randolph exemplified, and which the Puritans hated and dreaded, than is the Quaker who represents some of the gentlest and purest elements in our social life like the wild figures clad in sackcloth or in the less substantial garments of our first parents before the fall, — whose prophesyings were known by the same name. To every New Englander, the English Church stood for a spiritual tyranny which had driven the fathers out into the wilderness ; in practice a corruption of the simplicity of the Scriptural rule ; its hierarchy contrary to the Gospel ; its Book of Common Prayer idolatrous ; its adherents a worldly element, demoralizing to the best welfare of New England, — to be kept out if it could be done ; if not, at least to be prohibited from practicing their empty form of religionism on the Lord's Day — and to be held under the watch and ward of the Congregational Churches in the hope of regenerating them in a purer way.

Nor was it only the ancient grievance against Archbishop Laud which smarted in memory. No one could tell how far, — but they feared *very* far, — the Church and State religion of Charles II was identical in policy and principle with that of Charles I. They knew well what happened to Scotch Covenanters and to English Puritans, and had no reason for confidence in their own exemption from the same measure. Moreover, the English Church and the English State were identical. The representatives of the one would look after the interests of the other, and the tower of King's Chapel, if such a place should once be built, with its gilt mitre and crown, would be but a very short distance from the head of Long Wharf with the royal flag flying above a custom-house.

Those who are disturbed because the Massachusetts people liked their commercial independence better than paying duties as loyal subjects of Great Britain, forget that there may be an honest difference of opinion regarding the powers conferred by the Charter of Charles I. As the Puritans viewed it, this was practically independence. On that they had acted for fifty years; and only the force of the stronger could modify their conduct.

The point which the ruling influences here forgot, however, at the time which we are considering, was the very important fact that new elements had now come in among them, to a considerable degree modifying the tone

—if not *of* the community, at least *in* the community. The American process had begun, which we see in our own day (and not wholly to our liking), by which there is a perpetual transfusion of alien manners, customs, ways of thought and life into the veins of our people. Even in our own time, the process, though inevitable, is not gracefully accepted by us. The New England fathers saw clearly enough that all this tended toward a profound modification, if not extinction, of the idea on which New England was founded.

But the other elements were here to some extent, and they had come to stay, — Englishmen who felt that they had a right to come to the English colony, and who probably felt themselves better than the people whom they found here, from the very fact that they did not enjoy the type of religious ministrations which were dear to the New England heart. Lechford and Josselyn, a few years before, illustrate their state of mind. It did not make them more acceptable in the Puritan town, that they had come to make money and not for conscience' sake. But here they were, with clear preferences for the Church of England ritual in which they had been born and bred. They went to meeting, as the whole population did, and must, under the law. But a sort of silent protest must have been felt in their presence, though they probably rarely ventured to show it as frankly as Mrs. Randolph in 1682, when, sitting with her husband in Mr. Joyliffe's pew in the South Meeting-

House, she was "observed to make a curtesy at Mr. Willard's naming *Jefus*, even in Prayer time."

How many there were of this way of thinking it is impossible for us to discern through the mists of time. Randolph estimated the number of disaffected very high, — at four-fifths of the population; he also wrote home to the Bishop of London, after the Church of England had been set up here, that there was a congregation of four hundred. But his figures on all subjects are untrustworthy, unless we can check them from other sources of information; nor does he say how large a proportion was composed of "boys and negros," who, until the Revolution, constituted so large a part of the congregation of King's Chapel as to require a special officer to "look after" them, and whose "looking after" doubtless demanded pretty energetic measures of repression — not very godly or profitable worshipers.

The Records of King's Chapel contain no clear indication of the numbers of the congregation. I judge from them, however, that at first only a few persons of influence were willing to risk the obnoxious step of identifying themselves with the planting of the English Church here. Under the sunshine of Sir Edmund Andros, the Church blossomed into prosperity, but at his downfall the Puritans exulted in the thought that it had withered to the root.

These, then, were the elements that awaited the loss of the Charter which befell at last in October, 1684, after

nearly twenty years' "threatening;" on one side agonized fear, on the other eager hope, that a spiritual domination which was, according to the point of view, beneficent or blasting, would be overthrown.

The central figure in all this commotion is, of course, Edward Randolph. It was a correct instinct of our forefathers which judged that he was most dangerous to their peace, and saw in him by no means so beneficent an angel as Marlborough in Addison's poem, 'riding the whirlwind and directing the storm.' Randolph's letters which have been preserved to us give an invaluable record of the steps in the introduction of the Church of England in Boston; and clearly reveal a most resolute, persistent and able ending to the whole system of the Puritan Commonwealth. We can see in them how his unwearied flittings to and fro across the Atlantic were like the flying shuttle weaving a net around and around the New England State and Church. Everything in our laws and customs which could be noted to our prejudice was sure of being recorded and of being enlarged upon at last by him before Bishops and Lords in London.

Evasions of Custom-duties and Navigation laws, and regulations about church-membership and baptism, and prohibition of Christmas, all were heaped up to make fuel for the flame which was to destroy the Charter. There is no want of charity in doubting how far his religious zeal was *religious*. Church and State were so blended in those days in the thought of a loyal subject

of the Stuarts, that he probably could not have told, himself. But he was a faithful subject of the King of England, determined to enforce that authority; and he had the sagacity to see that no blow at the New England theocracy could be so deadly as the visible planting here of the Church which had loyalty to the King written all over its Prayer-book and its constitution.

Two years before the Charter was annulled, and four years before the arrival here of the Rev. Robert Ratcliffe, the first Church of England minister, Randolph had written to the Bishop of London, reminding him that "In my attendance of your lordship, I often exprest that some able ministers might be appoynted to performe the officies of the church with us. . The maine obstacle was [as might be supposed] how they should be maintayned." If there were as many people ready for these services as he stated, one would think there would be no difficulty; but Randolph had a more ingenious way than that, — which was to divert to this purpose the money which had been sent over to America by pious and charitable persons to be used in the propagation of the Gospel among the Indians. This was a favorite theme with him, and to it he frequently returned. It would have the double advantage of providing support for the English minister and of using for that purpose money which was given for a totally different one by people who would abhor this perversion of it. He also proposed that "no marriages hereafter shall be allowed lawfull.

but such as are made by the ministers of the Church of England." This in a country where, from the beginning, marriage was a purely civil ordinance, and where from motives of conscience ministers were prohibited from officiating at such services, — the French Huguenot, Vanderbosch, having been expelled from the jurisdiction in 1684 and written down in history as a "drunken, worthless fellow," besides, because he presumed to do so. Probably nothing could have been suggested, better adapted to annoy and enrage the people here, than these devices, except the crowning and favorite plan of Randolph, to seize one of the three meeting-houses which these people had built with their own money, and to set up in it the Church of England worship. Nor is there any reason to doubt that all these plans of his would have been accomplished if James II had retained his throne a few years longer. Meantime, at judicious intervals of time, he dropped the seeds of these ideas in the minds of those in authority at home.

Before any question of the mode of his subject was settled, the minister himself arrived, a long-delayed blessing, May 15, 1686. Nearly four years before, Randolph had written to the Bishop, "The very report that your lordship hath remembered us and sent over a minister hath given great satisfaction to many hundreds whose children are not baptized, and to as many who never, since they came out of England, received the sacraments." The cause of the delay till a year and a half

after the Charter was annulled, was the death of Charles II, and the changes consequent thereon.

Mr. Ratcliffe came in the "Rose" frigate, with Capt. George, the same officer who was captured by the people in the memorable rising against Andros in April, 1689, and the same ship which was compelled to surrender on that great day. They brought with them the commission to Joseph Dudley as President of Massachusetts, Maine, Nova Scotia, and the lands between.

And now our Town-House becomes the scene of eventful things. We can look over Sewall's shoulder as he writes in his little brown diary day by day, and can enter into the intense though suppressed feeling of the writer at the events which brought home to all the reality of the change which had come. We see Randolph hurrying up from Nantasket on the arrival of the "Rose" on Friday, May 14, so that he reaches town by 8 o'clock in the morning, and posting off by coach to Roxbury to notify Major Dudley of his new dignity. We see the dignitaries, whom Dudley has summoned to Capt. Paige's, assuring their own eyes that it is really so, as they see "the Exemplification of the Judgement against the Charter, with the Broad Seal affixed," and that it is hopeless to resist.

The Sabbath intervenes, — a dark day for the New Englanders. Randolph and his family sit meekly in a pew at the South Meeting-house, and hear the Rev. Mr.

Willard pray 'hot for the Governour or Government as formerly, but speak so as implies it to be changed or changing.'" On Monday, the General Court sits at the Town-House to hear its fate. "The Old Government," writes Sewall, "draws to the North side, Mr. Addington, Capt. Smith and I sit at the Table, there not being room : Major Dudley the President, Major Pyncheon, Capt. Gedney, Mr. Mason, Randolph, Capt. Winthrop, Mr. Wharton, come in on the Left. Mr. Stoughton I left out : Came also Capt. [of] King's Frigate, Gov^r. Hinkley, Gov^r. West, and sat on the Bench and the Room pretty well filled with Spectators in an Instant. Major Dudley made a Speech, that was sorry could treat them no longer as Government Company ; Produced the Exemplification of the Charter's Condemnation, the Commiffion under the Broad Seal of England, both : . . . openly exhibiting them to the People ; when had done, Deputy Governour said suppos'd they expected not the Court's Answer now ; which the President took up and said they could not acknowledge them as such, and could no way capitulate with them, to which I think no Reply. When gone . . . spoke our minds. I chose to say after the Major General, adding that the foundations being destroyed what can the Righteous do ? speaking against a Protest ; which some spoke for."

The dramatic close of this episode falls on the Friday following, when Sewall found the magistrates and Deputies not at the Town House but at the Governor's.

"Mr. Nowell prayed that God would pardon such Magistrates' and Deputy's Sin. Thanked God for our hithertos of Mercy fifty-six years, in which time Sad Calamities elsewhere, as massacre Piedmont: thanked God for what we might expect from fundry of those now set over us. I moved to sing, so sang the 17 and 18 verses of Habakkuk." That touching and sublime expression of trust, which declares that "although the fig-tree shall not blossom, . . . and the labor of the olive shall fail, . . . yet I will rejoice in the Lord," was the expiring cry of the old New England theocracy. No wonder that as they saw the edifice of the fathers go down in ruins "Many Tears were shed in Prayer and at parting." Yet they expired with faith upon their lips.

But while the old glory thus withdrew its vanishing skirts from the noteworthy building which had seen the Government of Massachusetts administered under the Charter by able and resolute lovers of the old New England way, the echoes of unfamiliar sounds in this Puritan air had already been heard within those walls; for on the Tuesday of that week, by whose authority we are not told, "Prayer was had at y^e Town-Houfe,"—the first public administration of the ritual of the English Church since the Colony began. And the same day saw Mr. Ratcliffe marry a couple "according to y^e Service Book," and that too, with a ring, which they "borroowd."

But another Sunday passed before the formal application was made for due recognition of the Church Estab-

lished by Law in Great Britain. One would like to know where Mr. Ratcliffe went to meeting that day, or if he broke the strict Sabbath-keeping laws and stayed at home. On Wednesday, however, May 26, "Mr. Ratcliffe, the Minister, waits on the Council; Mr. Mafon and Randolph propose that he may have one of the three Houses to preach in. That is deny'd, and he is granted the East-End of the Town-House, where the Deputies used to meet; untill those who desire his Ministry shall provide a fitter place."

We can look around the Council-board and see by the records who were present to consider this request. Dudley, Stoughton, Fitz and Wait, Winthrop, Pynchon, Dudley Wharton, Gedney, and E. Tyng. We may well regret that Sewall was not a councillor, and that no record is preserved of that scene, — the gloom and hesitation on the brow of the majority of the Council, determined to oppose as far as they can be, yet afraid to oppose too far, and troubled by the thought that there is one among them who will report everything at home. If you will look at the portrait of William Stoughton, at Harvard College, painted in his old age, you will perhaps think with me that the pinched and worried expression dates from this anxious moment. Mason and Randolph, however, are triumphant.

Dudley is full of perplexity. He knows well that if he favors one inch of concession he will lose his last hold on the people, who distrust him; — that if he does not,

he will offend Randolph ; — and he dares not kick away that ladder of his fortune. He still wears the long, straight Puritan hair, and has the Puritan cast of face. The day will come when he will return from England to be Governor, with huge wig and the look of a man of the world, but he has not yet emerged from the chrysalis.

A good and honest bearing, — that of an English gentleman, is that of the Rev. Robert Ratcliffe, “a sober, prudent gentleman and well approved,” wearing the long black cassock of his calling ; “a very Excellent Preacher, whose matter was good, and the Drefs in which he put it Extraordinary, he being as well an Orator as a Preacher.” In graceful, dignified speech he asks that the King’s Church may have a fit shelter in the King’s most loyal Colony, and then withdraws, while the debate is urged, with hot and bitter words.

And now turn from the debate on this all-engrossing subject, which must have thrilled from the Town-House throughout the little town, and try and picture to yourselves the state of mind of the Puritans when they think how their one public building, the symbol and shelter of the highest authority of the Commonwealth, is given up to this use, — the Puritan State taking, as it were, under the wing of its sanction (though with an ill grace) the representative of that which cast the fathers out from the Mother Country ! We are not left to imagination ; for one of them has outlined his feeling in his Diary.

Walk up Prison Lane with me then, leaving the porticoed Town-House behind you, — a company of men and boys watching anxiously to see if Mr. Ratcliffe will come in his surplice, or like the ministers of the town, in Geneva gown and bands. And now here is Mr. Samuel Sewall's house, "at a distance from other buildings and in winter very bleake," on the slope of Beacon Hill, near our Pemberton Square to-day. On this mild May morning, the casement of diamond panes set in lead, in the house which Sir Harry Vane built and where John Cotton once dwelt, is left ajar, and you can hear the family prayers. An eight-year-old boy is reading. "My Son reads to me in courfe y^e 26th of Isaiah — 'In that day shall y^e Song be sung, etc.' And we sing the 141 Psalm, both exceedingly fuited to y^e day wherein there is to be Worship according to y^e Chh of Engld as 'tis called, in y^e Town-Houfe, by Countenance of Authority."

The Psalm rises on the still air, in the rugged version of the Bay Psalm Book, to one of the old tunes which Sewall delighted to sing. "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips Incline not my heart to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I escape." And then the father of the family prays, doubtless in a tone and strain whose

key-note was sounded by the Scripture lesson. So was it, probably, in hundreds of old-fashioned Boston homes, as well as Sewall's, on that day when 'Worship according to the Church of England' was 'in the Town-House, by Countenance of Authority.'

It was not, however, till the next Sunday, June 6, that worship was really held, as "a movable pulpitt" had to be provided, "carried up and down stairs, as occasion serves." "It seems," says Sewall, "many crowded thither."

On June 15, 1686, a meeting for organization was held, "by the members of the Church of England, as by Law establiſhed, under the gracious influences of the moſt illuſtrious Prince, our Sovereign Lord James II, By the Grace of God, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland King, defendour of the faith, etc. . . . at Boſton within his ſaid majeſties territory and Dominion of New England in America." Dr. Benjamin Bullivant and Mr. Richard Bankes were elected Church Wardens, and the first record book of King's Chapel, an old parchment-bound folio, gives the names of those who were present, including of course Edward Randolph, "one of his majeſties councill."

It was here voted to send "an humble addreſſe" to the King, "to implore his Majeſties' favour to our Church," and to write to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. Also "Agreed, That Mr. Smith, the Joyner, do make twelve formes, for the fer-

vice of the Church, for each of which he shall be paid 4 s., 8 d.

"Agreed, with the said mr. Smith, the Joyner, that this Church will pay and allow unto him 20/8 Quarterlie, and every Quarter, for and in Consideration of his cleaneing, Placeing, and removeing the Pulpitt, formes, table, etc., and doing all other things which shall be Convenient and Neceffary in our place and publique Affembling."

This was "to furnish the Library room in the Town-House in a decent manner for the performance of divine Service." Says Dr. Greenwood:—"This was truly an humble beginning for those who made such high pretensions as did these zealous royalists and churchmen. As they assembled in the east end of the Town-House, and looked round on their 'twelve formes' and their 'movable pulpitt,' they must have felt the contrast between such a tabernacle and the solemn old cathedrals at home; and have felt, too, that they were among a people, who, though of the same blood with themselves, were strangers to their mode of faith and worship, despising what they esteemed most sacred, and setting at nought the power which they deemed unquestionable. It is hardly to be supposed that these feelings were calculated to conciliate them toward the Congregationalists, or that the condition in which they found themselves was favorable at the time to their growth in Christian humility or charity."

The wonderful thing was, certainly, that they should find themselves in the Town-House at all ; and it shows how far the spirit of the Colony was under the dread of English power. But when it came to any concession beyond, even the Council or a majority of them, though it contained Dudley, Mason and Randolph, was firm. A fortnight later, July 1, a paper from "Mr. Robert Ratcliffe, desiring an honorable maintenance and good encouragement (suitable for a Minister of the Church of England) was read" at the Council meeting, and in answer it was "Ordered That the Contribution money collected in the Church where he performs divine service, be solely applied to the maintenance of Mr. Ratcliffe." No extreme concession, certainly. So the minister was left to the £50 a year which was thus collected.

And now if we pass out of the Council chamber, where doubtless this proposition had been hotly debated, and where Randolph had been greatly disgusted at the finching of Dudley (whom he had put in power) from carrying out his will, into the Library room, we can catch glimpses of the scene. Even the Puritan Sewall, though he deemed its presence there a pollution, and "dehorted" his family from entering such assemblies, somehow knew what was going on. When "one Mr. Clark, [of the English Church] preaches at the Town-House and speaks much against the Presbyterians in England and here," he hears the echo ; and when "one Robison Esq^r., that came from Antego, is buried with

the Common Prayer and first was had to the Town-House and set before the Pulpit," and when on "Sabbath day, Aug^t. 8, 'Tis said the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered at the Town-House," he notes "cleverly there."

Meantime Randolph was writing home, with touches that add vividness to the picture. "Our Company increasing beyond the expectation of the gov^{nt}., we now use y^e Exchange, and have y^e Common-prayer and two sermons every Sunday, and at 7 o'clock in y^e morning on Wednesdays and Frydays the whole service of y^e Church." In a later letter he writes "To humour the people our minister preaches twice a day, and baptizes all that come to him,—some infants, some adult persons. We . . . resolve not to be baffled by the great affronts,—some calling our minister Baal's priest, and some of their ministers from the pulpit calling our prayers leeks, garlick, and trash . . . To all my crimes [I have] added this one as the greatest, in bringing the letherdge and cerimonie of the Church of England to be observed amongst us."

But there were those who did not, like Randolph, write letters, whose feelings we ought to try to penetrate, if we would understand why the Church of England ought to be allowed here, and how it won its way. Those to whom that little Library-room at the east end of the Town-House was like the chamber looking toward the sunrising, in which Bunyan's pilgrim lay till the dawn

and arose and sang a hymn. "In the most contentious and stormy periods," says Dr. Greenwood, "I doubt not that a holy calm was shed upon the heart of many a worshiper as he offered up his prayers in the way which to him was best and most affecting, and perhaps the way in which, long years ago, he had offered them up in some ivy-clad village church of green England, with many dear friends about him, now absent or dead. And when they celebrated their first Communion, on the second Sabbath in August, 1686, I am fully persuaded that it was celebrated in that small room which they held by sufferance, and round that "table" which was their cheap and lately-constructed altar, with as much reverence and humility and edification, as it was in any church or meeting-house in Old England or New."

The occupancy of the Town-House was long enough to give the spot indelible associations, yet not so long as the Puritans may have desired. For already in the same July came the report that Dudley's Presidency would be very brief, and in December his rumored successor arrived. The extremists among the Churchmen had doubtless been content to await his coming, in hopes of then seeing more energetic measures adopted. They started a subscription paper, indeed, for money to build a church for themselves, but there seems not to have been enough of them to prosper greatly with this, from their own resources, and a sufficient motive was wanting to persuade the Puritan party to contribute. Sewall

records that Randolph asked *him* to do so, but "seemed displeas'd because he spake not up to it." The temporary occupation of the Town-House continued, therefore, unchanged, through that summer and autumn of 1686; and there Sir Edmund Andros found the little nurseling of the English Church feebly housed from the wintry climate of New England, when on December 20 he landed, the representative of the Roman Catholic King who was *ex-officio* head of Church as well as State.

The moment we speak of Andros, a wide and tempting field opens before us, which would lead us beyond our subject, and quite outside the doors of the Old Town-House, although indeed it is around that building that the whole of that picturesque chapter of our Colonial history seems to revolve, from the day of his triumphal entry into it to the memorable April day, twenty-eight months after, when the "Declaration" deposing him was read from its gallery, and he was brought to it a prisoner. But our field of vision to-day only sees him as now the pivotal person in the questions which at once arose concerning the Church of England here.

We see him then on that December 20 landing "at Gov^r. Leveret's wharf about 2 P. M. where the Prefident, &c., meet him, and so march up through the Guards of the 8 Companyes to the Town-House, where part of the Comission read." Whether the sentence was *read*, we are not told, which enjoined "that such especially as shall be conformable to the rites of the Church of England be

particularly countenanced and encouraged ;" but his first act was to carry out its spirit. He takes the oath of allegiance and as Governor ; then putting on his hat in token of superiority administers the oaths to the Councillors. Then entering the Library room, he "Speaks to the Ministers there about Accommodation as to a Meeting-House, that might so contrive the time as one House might serve two Assemblies."

Perhaps the pinched and bare surroundings of the little room which he looked round upon stirred his choler (which lay near the surface of his mind), as he thought how these Congregationalists were housed in spacious temples ; perhaps the Tempter in the shape wherein the Puritan party almost believed him to be incarnated, — in the person of Randolph, — was at his ear with his favorite suggestion. Perhaps this point had been pressed upon him before embarking for America, by the Bishop of London. However it may be, there is to my mind no more striking grouping of vivid and picturesque contrasts to be found in our early history than the scene which Sewall's Diary has preserved to us in scantiest outline, when in that moment in the Library room of the Old Town-House, the power of Great Britain, in the person of the King's Governor, met the persistent resistance of New England Puritanism, in the person of the Boston ministers, face to face.

Andros stands with easy dignity and conscious power, not clad, as we see him in his portrait, in the shining

breast-plate which so well befits a soldier, but as a gentleman of the court, "in a Scarlet Coat Laced," with lace falling from his sleeves and in a rich cravat at his neck, the flowing hair or wig, as becomes a cavalier, increasing his resemblance to the Stuart sovereigns whom he served; an aquiline nose, a flashing eye, the bearing of a man who had braved danger in soldierly campaigns, —altogether a different figure from any that had been seen here. Able, imperious, an honest servant of the despot to whom alone he believed his loyalty was due, —let us give him his deserts of respect, though we do not love him and are thankful that the cause which he stood for went down in wreck. Our history is infinitely richer because only one Andros was possible for us; and it is more picturesque because there was *one*.

Over against him is another group of five men in sombre clerical dress, their look and bearing always austere and probably specially so at this moment. They have come with the other dignitaries to welcome him with fit respect, — but with no intention of receiving his commands. He may bear himself like a courtier, but they are not the less ambassadors of the Highest, and some of them could stand in any assembly with Andros as peers in self-possession and in dignity, and one of them certainly is to prove himself more than his peer in statesmanship, before this controversy is done.

To Andros probably, at this moment, Increase Mather seemed a very insignificant personage; but he found his

mistake later. When Boston has time to go back and gather up the memories of those who have deserved most, no memorial tablet or statue will be deemed too good for the man who procured for us the Charter of William and Mary. His face is also preserved to us, the countenance of a Puritan scholar, thoughtful, refined, severe. The lineaments of Samuel Willard also, of the South Church, are perpetuated in a frontispiece to his *Body of Divinity*, — a typical Puritan face, lined with thought and care.

And with them in the group are Cotton Mather, young and full of promise, with most of his books still lying unwritten in his busy, restless brain ; — and James Allen of the First Church, rich and hospitable ; and his colleague Joshua Moodey, who having been imprisoned in Portsmouth for his Puritan conscience by one Governor, is not likely to be very compliant with the request of another. It was as typical a group in our New England history, as the famous Five Members of Parliament in that momentous scene which was like the stroke of destiny for Charles I.

Behind them is the whole passive resisting force of the substance of New England, when they give answer, after a day's interval for consultation, that 'they cannot with a good conscience consent.' Nor can there be a doubt that when Sir Edmund finally decided, as the Passion week of 1687 drew near, to take possession of the South Church for his own Church Service, he really

did as much to prepare his downfall as when he acted on the theory that the title of Massachusetts land-owners from the Indians 'was worth no more than the scratch of a bear's paw.'

For the present, however, we see him putting up with the 'twelve formes' and 'the movable pulpitt' in the Town-House, where there was scant room for the increasing company of worshipers. Thither he goes, when January 25 "is kept for St. Paul," and when "Monday, January 31, there is "a Meeting at the Town-House forenoon and afternoon, Bell rung for it, respecting the beheading Charles the First. Governor there, very bad going by reason of the watery snow."

There, then, we leave him, as we turn away from that scene of Old World loyalty in this uncongenial clime;—around him the group of courtiers from England or New York, and those whom the New England bitterness regarded as renegades,—most of them in the gay apparel and of the fashion which cast a gleam of brightness on the sombre hue of Puritan Boston; officers in scarlet uniforms, and the Governor's guardsmen,—and in the midst the Rev. Robert Ratcliffe reading those passages in which the account of the Passion of Christ is applied to the Blessed Martyrdom of Charles I, while the congregation devoutly respond. "They shed the blood of the just in the midst of Jerusalem." "How is he numbered with the children of God; and his lot is among the saints."

If we listen for the faint echoes of the preacher's words, we can hear them in the rubric of the "Form of Prayer with Fasting, to be used yearly on the 30th of January, being the Day of the Martyrdom of the Blessed King Charles the First, to implore the mercy of God, that neither the guilt of that sacred and innocent Blood, nor those other sins, by which God was provoked to deliver up both us and our King into the Hands of cruel and unreasonable Men, may at any Time hereafter be visited upon us, or our Posterity," which enjoins that "after the Nicene Creed, shall be read, instead of the Sermon for that Day, the first and second parts of the Homily against Disobedience and wilful Rebellion, set forth by Authority; or the Minister who officiates shall preach a Sermon of his own composing upon the same argument."

And the words of solemn prayer rise from the preacher's lips, there in the Town-House of New England's Puritan people: "We acknowledge it thine especial favour, that though for our many and great provocations, thou didst suffer thine Anointed, blessed King Charles the First, (as on this day) to fall into the hands of violent and blood-thirsty men, and barbarously to be murdered by them; yet thou didst not leave us forever, as sheep without a shepherd; but by thy gracious providence didst miraculously preserve the undoubted Heir of his Crowns, our then gracious Sovereign King Charles the Second, from his bloody enemies, hid-

ing him under the shadow of thy wings, until their tyranny was overpast Grant to our gracious Sovereign King James, a long and happy reign over us." And Governor and people say, Amen.

It was in the spirit of such old-fashioned loyalties that the Church which was soon built, to relieve the South Meeting-House of its unwelcome tenants, took, from the beginning, as a matter of course, the name of King's Chapel. And by a fine felicity, as an illustration how the loyalties which fitly belonged here while we were English subjects could be continued on a higher plane and in a loftier key after the Royal Province became a Commonwealth in the Great Republic, — the name was continued after the Revolution in token of loyalty to the "King of kings."

Not only the Church which was thus first sheltered in the Old Town-House, but all that family of churches which are descended from the Mother Church of England, may well look upon that spot as the Cradle of their Faith. And more than that, the fact should be imperishably connected with it, that (though against the will of New England and by some constraint of royal power) the Old Town-House was the first spot where freedom of religious worship was recognized as "by authority," — where the ancient order began to give place to the modern world.

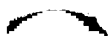
NOTE.

BESIDE Sewall's Diary, so frequently cited by the author of the previous paper, there are numerous authorities which shed additional light on the incidents so graphically described by Mr. Foote, among which may be mentioned his History of King's Chapel, and the letters written by Randolph to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1686, giving particulars respecting his efforts in Boston for the introduction of the service of the Established Church into the Province, printed in the Hutchinson Papers (pp. 550-54 of the original edition, or Vol. II, pp. 291-96 of the Prince Society's reprint). The Historical Collections relating to the American Colonial Church, compiled by Bishop Perry, the Andros Tracts, Vol. II, pp. 45, 211, etc., Greenwood's History of King's Chapel, Drake's History of Boston (pp. 467-72), Palfrey's History of New England (Vol. III, pp. 521-22), etc., may also be consulted. — ED.

**THE
OLD FEDERAL STREET THEATRE**

BY

WILLIAM T. W. BALL





THE OLD FEDERAL STREET THEATRE

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL
CHAMBER, OLD STATE HOUSE, JUNE 11, 1889, BY

WILLIAM T. W. BALL



THE theatre has been the admiration of all ages and all climes. It is at once instructive and amusing, and it has become, and will continue to be, one of the essential elements of a refined and refining civilization. The theatre, and the mysteries attendant upon it, are associated with our earliest recollections ; it may be that our first introduction to its enchantments may cause us to exclaim with Dickens' poor demented Maggie, "Oh, ain't it a 'Ev'nly place" ; or we may have fancied that it took on the hues of a locality directly opposite, for there is no accounting for tastes ; but I believe the great majority experienced feelings similar to those of little David Copperfield when first he saw what the

flaring footlights revealed. He was taken to Covent Garden, and from the back of a centre box saw Julius Caesar, and the new pantomime — Shakespeare, and the Lord knows who in the pantomimic line, on the same night !

Thus he describes his first impressions : — “To have all those noble Romans alive before me, and walking in and out for my entertainment, instead of being the stern taskmasters they had been at school, was a most novel and delightful effect. But the mingled reality and mystery of the whole show, the influence upon me of the poetry, the lights, the music, the company, the smooth stupendous changes of glittering and brilliant scenery, were so dazzling, and opened up such illimitable regions of delight, that when I came out into the rainy street, at 12 o'clock at night, I felt as if I had come from the clouds, where I had been leading a romantic life for ages, to a howling, splashing, link-lighted, umbrella-struggling, hackney-coach-jostling, pat-ten-clinking, muddy, miserable world.” Such indeed might have been, if they were not, the feelings of all of us.

I do not propose to read an essay on the theatre, or theatres in general, but simply to say a few words about the old Federal Street Theatre, once the pride of our city. Unknown to the present generation, it had a warm place in the hearts of our older theatre goers, and triumphs of some of the noblest actors and actresses

who ever donned the sock and buskin, still linger in their memory.

It was with the greatest difficulty that the drama was planted in Massachusetts soil, which seemed to be too sterile to permit it to grow. Down to a late period public opinion opposed every attempt it made to gain a footing, and for a time the noble institution was compelled to hide its face behind the deceptive mask of "Moral Lectures."

True it is, that as far back as 1686, according to Cotton Mather, there was "much discourse now of beginning stage plays in New England," but like Lord Burleigh's head, "there was nothing in it." About 1749, a couple of adventurous Englishmen, not having a dread of Puritanism hanging over them, did, in a coffee house on State (then King) street, give a performance, such as it was, of Otway's play, "The Orphan, or Unhappy Marriage," which on its first representation in London called to its interpretation the leading lights of the British stage. It would be a pleasure to know who were the actors who sustained the parts of Chamont, of Castalio, of Polydore, and of Monimia; and a double gratification to learn the names of those ladies and gentlemen of Boston who braved public opinion, by giving their countenance to the performance. There must have been a touch of grim humor in the selection of this particular play, if for no

other reason than the pronounciation of these lines in the third act :—

If you're religious keep it to yourselves ;
Atheists will else make use of toleration,
And laugh you out on't. Never shew religion
Except you mean to pass for knaves of conscience
And cheat believing fools that think ye honest !

The presentation of this play stirred up so much feeling, that in March of the following year, the Great and General Court found it necessary to pass an Act laden with stringent penalties sufficient to prevent, as it was thought, a recurrence of the offence. The adoption of this Act was but a temporary measure, to be held in force for four years, and it was continued from time to time by legislative action.

Every possible means was taken, with more or less success, to evade its provisions, and on November 7th, 1792,* Governor Hancock, a hater of plays and players, deemed it necessary to appear before the Legislature in person and address it in reference to the growing evil. Said he :

Gentlemen, — I am urged by a sense of duty to communicate my mind upon a transaction which I cannot but consider as an open insult upon the laws and the Government of the Commonwealth.

* Clapp, in "Record of the American Stage," p. 13, gives this date (probably more correctly), as early in December. — ED.

In the year 1750 the Legislature of this then Province of Massachusetts Bay passed an Act entitled "An Act to prevent Stage-plays and other Theatrical Entertainments." The Act was temporary and only for four years. Perhaps the improbability of obtaining the royal assent to a permanent prohibition of such entertainments was the reason which induced the Legislature to conduct the business in this manner. . . . By subsequent Acts . . . it was continued in force until the year 1797.

The preamble of the Act is in these words : " For preventing and avoiding many great mischiefs which arise from public stage-plays, interludes and other theatrical entertainments, which not only occasion great and unnecessary expense, and discourage industry and frugality; but likewise tend greatly to increase immorality, impiety and contempt of religion."

Whether the apprehensions of the evils which might flow from theatrical exhibitions so fully expressed in the preamble of that Act are well founded or not, may be a proper subject of legislative disquisition, on a motion for the continuance or the repeal of the law; but the Act is now a Law of the Commonwealth. The principles on which it is predicated have been recognized by and derive support from the consideration of several Legislatures, and surely it ought to claim the respect and obedience of all persons who live, or happen to be within the Commonwealth. Yet a number of aliens and foreigners have lately entered the State, and in the metropolis of the Government, under advertisement insulting to the habits and education of the citizens, have been pleased to invite them to, and exhibit before such as

attended, stage-plays, interludes and theatrical entertainments, under the style and appellation of "Moral Lectures." The fact is so notorious that it is in vain to attempt a concealment of its coming to your knowledge.

Whether the judicial departments, whose business it is, have attended to this subject or not, I am unable to determine; but this I am convinced of: that no measures have been taken to punish a most open breach of the laws and a most contemptuous insult upon the powers of the Government.

You, gentlemen, are the guardians of the Commonwealth's dignity and honor, and our fellow citizens rely upon your vigilance and wisdom for the support of the sovereignty and importance of the Government. I therefore refer this matter to your determinations, and cannot but hope that your resolutions and measures will give efficacy to the laws and be the means of bringing to condign punishment those who dare to treat them with contempt or open opposition.

Only fancy a Governor berating a Massachusetts Legislature in such a style at the present day! But John Hancock possessed the courage of his convictions, and his resolute character was evident from his bold signature down to the very soles of his silver-buckled shoes.

This was the "transaction" which caused Hancock to uncork the vials of his wrath.—Sometime about the middle of the year 1792, there arrived from London a company of comedians, the chief of whom was Charles Stuart Powell. They leased a stable in Board alley, now known as Hawley street, and fitted it up for theatri-

cal entertainments under the name of "Moral Lectures." This theatre was opened on the 10th of August, and as the programme is in itself a curiosity, I give it you :

NEW EXHIBITION ROOMS.

BOARD ALLEY.

FEATS OF ACTIVITY.

This evening the 10th of August, will be exhibited Dancing
on the Tight Rope by

MONSIEURS PLACIDE AND MARTIN.

Mons. Placide will dance a Hornpipe on a Tight Rope,
play a Violin in various attitudes, and jump over
a cane backwards and forwards.

Introductory Address by Mr. Harper.

Singing by Mr. Woods.

Various feats of tumbling by Mons. Placide and Martin,
who will make somersetts backwards, over a table, chair, etc.

In the course of the evening's entertainments will be delivered

THE GALLERY OF PORTRAITS,

OR THE WORLD AS IT GOES,

By Mr. Harper.

The whole to conclude with a dancing Ballet called

THE BIRD CATCHER,

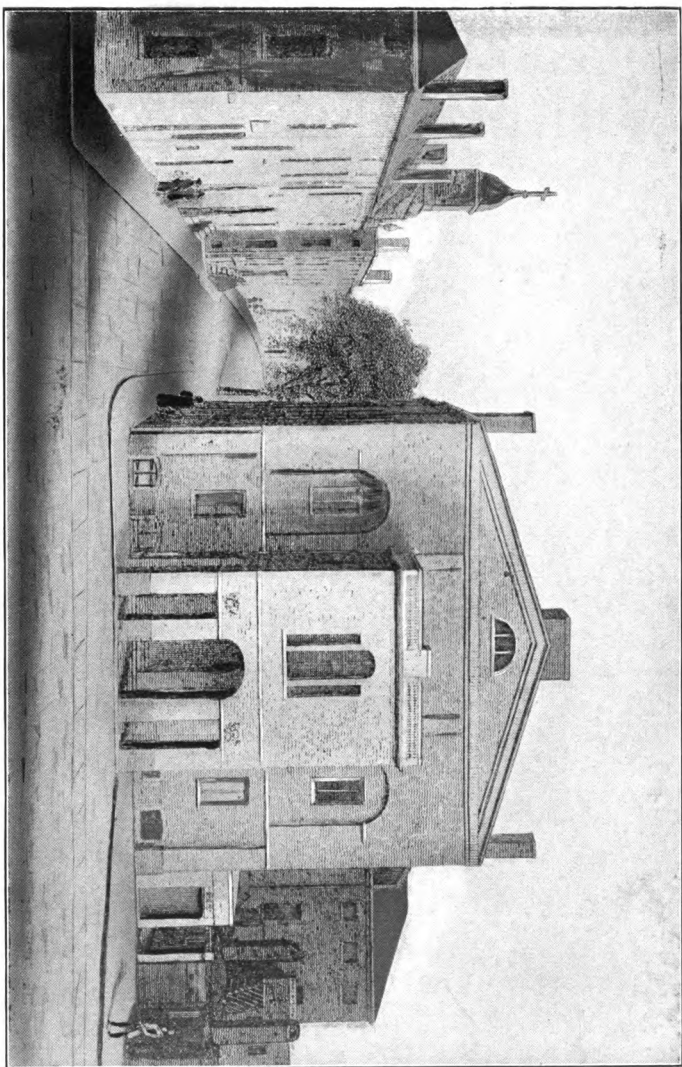
with the Minuet de la Cour and the Gavot.

This surely was what may be termed "Lenten entertainment," but it was the entering wedge. Things went on for a number of weeks, when the Moral Lectures were brought to an abrupt termination by the appear-

ance on the stage one evening, of Sheriff Allen who arrested one of the performers arrayed in the kingly robes of Richard the Third.* The sympathies of the audience were with the players, and an incipient riot was the result. Hancock's portrait, which was one of the decorations of the theatre, was torn from its place and trampled under foot. The captured player was brought before the magistrates, and being ably defended by Harrison Gray Otis, was discharged on technical grounds; and owing to the exertions of Otis, Samuel Adams and John Gardiner, names dear to Bostonians, the law was repealed, notwithstanding the efforts of the Governor in its favor; and a new and happier era dawned upon the stage.

Encouraged by the repeal of the obnoxious law, and receiving countenance from the more liberal of the towns-people, Powell at once took steps to place the drama in Boston upon a permanent basis, and his efforts resulted in the building of the Federal Street Theatre,

* The author follows the version of the affair given in Loring's "Hundred Boston Orators," which says that the play interrupted was "Richard III," and that the sheriff arrested the King during the scene of Bosworth Field; Drake in "Landmarks of Boston," also says that the officer "arrested one of the performers as he stood in the guise of the crook-backed tyrant." But this is an error. The contemporary account given in the "Columbian Centinel" of the following Saturday, and the printed Programme show that the plays announced for the evening were "The School for Scandal" and "The True-born Irishman," and the interruption occurred during the first; owing to the disturbance the second was not given. The sheriff was "one Mr. Jerry Allen," and the actor, "Mr. Harper." See Clapp's "Record of the Boston Stage," pp. 12, 13.—ED.



THE OLD FEDERAL STREET THEATRE.

which was the first regular theatre established in this city. The site selected was on the northwesterly corner of Franklin and Federal streets, fronting on the latter, and extending back to Theatre Alley, now Devonshire street. The noted Charles Bulfinch was the architect.

The building, still remembered by many of us, was of brick, 140 feet long, 61 wide and 40 high. From the front a species of arcade projected, which served as a covered way for carriages. In its external appearance the house resembled a building of two stories, ornamented by a series of arches, which were pierced with square windows. The front and rear were further decorated by Corinthian columns and pilasters. The means of egress were ample, and in case of fire or other accident, it could be emptied expeditiously.

In its interior capacity the theatre was circular in form, and the ceiling or dome consisted of elliptical arches resting on Corinthian columns. There was a pit, two tiers of boxes, and a gallery. The stage was spacious, the proscenium neat and attractive, having in the centre of the arch the National and State arms enriched by tragic and comic emblems, depending from which was the Shakespearian motto, "All the world's a stage." The walls were painted a cerulean blue, and the columns in front of the boxes relieved in lilac and straw-color, while the balustrades, mouldings, etc., were in gold. A charming effect was given the house by draping the boxes of the second tier in crimson silk.

Aside from the theatre proper, the easterly end was converted into a handsomely decorated and spacious ball-room, with the necessary complement of retiring and dressing-rooms, while underneath the theatre there was a well-furnished restaurant, with all the appliances. Admission to the boxes was obtained by the main entrance on Federal street, the ticket holders passing into a saloon from which two staircases led to corridors in the rear of the boxes. The pit and gallery had independent entrances, located on Franklin street. The interior was admirably constructed for sight and sound, and the entire building was a noble monument to the enterprise of the day.

While it was erecting, Powell returned to England for the purpose of securing a "cry of players" who should in every respect be worthy of the new theatre and the patronage of the town. In this he was successful, bringing with him Messrs. Baker, Jones, Nelson, Bartlett, Collins, Snelling Powell, subsequently a power in our local theatricals, and Kenny; and Miss Harrison, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Baker, and Mrs. Collins. It may be said of this company that each lady and gentleman was proficient in the business of the stage. They had all served their regular apprenticeship to it, and were familiar alike with its traditions and requirements.

The theatre was opened to the public February 3, 1794, Baker being associated with Powell in the management, and both were assisted by the trustees of the

stockholders, who retained a controlling power over the affairs of the theatre — a pernicious system by the way, as the history of our later Boston theatres teaches. The bill of the opening performance is in itself a curiosity of composition, if nothing else, and reads :

NEW THEATRE.

Mr. Powell takes this opportunity of acquainting the Ladies and Gentlemen of Boston and its vicinity, that the new and elegant THEATRE will open this Monday evening, Feb. 3d, 1794, with the truly Republican Tragedy

GUSTAVUS VASA

THE DELIVERER OF HIS COUNTRY.

All the characters (being the first time they were ever performed by the present company), will be personated by Messrs. Baker, Jones, Collins, Nelson, Bartlett, Powell, S. Powell and Kenny; Miss Harrison, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Baker, and the child by Miss Cordelia Powell, being her first appearance on any stage.

To which will be added an Entertainment, called

MODERN ANTIQUES

OR, THE MERRY MOURNERS.

Mr. and Mrs. Cockletop by Mr. Jones and Miss Baker. The other characters by Messrs. S. Powell, Collins, Nelson, Baker, &c., Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Baker, and Mrs. Collins.

As we shall ever wish to give what we conceive to be the most Harmonic to the soul, and congenial to the general sentiments of our brethren of the land we live in, the following distribution of the music will precede the drawing up of the curtain.


YANKEE DOODLE.

GRAND BATTLE OVERTURE IN HENRY FOURTH.

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S MARCH.

The Prefatory Address by Mr. C. Powell, between the Acts.

A Grand Symphony by Signor Charles Stametz; Grand Overture by Signor Vanhall; Grand Symphony by Signor Haydn; do. by Charles Ditters.

 Box, one dollar; PIT, 3^s. 9; GALLERY, one quarter of a dollar.

The doors will be opened at five, and the curtain drawn up precisely at six o'clock.

One paragraph which appeared in the opening advertisements in the papers is worthy of all commendation. It read,

The Master of Ceremonies would so far presume upon the politeness of ladies, as to request that such of them who may be seated in the boxes, where the seats are low, would attend without hats, bonnets, feathers, or any other high head-dresses, that the sight of the gentlemen who are seated behind them, may not be obstructed.

The opening Address was delivered by Powell in the character of Apollo. It was the work of Robert Treat Paine, the younger, then a youth of eighteen, who received the prize of a gold medal. The Address, as suited the taste of the day, was a very long one, and abounded in noble sentiments. After sketching the history of the drama in all ages and climes, it closed with this apostrophe to the new house : —

And now, thou dome, by Freedom's patrons reared,
With Beauty blazoned, and by Taste revered;
Apollo consecrates thy walls profane, —
Hence be thou sacred to the Muses' reign!
In thee three ages in one shall conspire:
A Sophocles shall sweep his lofty lyre;

A Terence rise, in chariest charms serene;
A Sheridan display the polished scene.
The first with epic grief shall swell the stage,
And give to virtue fiction's noblest rage;
The second, laws to Beauty shall impart
And copy nature by the rules of art;
The last great master ends invention's strife
And gilds the mirror which he holds to life!
Thy classic lares shall exalt our times,
With distant ages and remotest climes;
And Athens, Rome, Augusta, blush to see
Their virtue, beauty, grace, all shine — combined in thee!

It is to be regretted that the early records of our local stage are so incomplete that no extended notice of those who composed this company is at hand, but of a few of them we have some information. Elizabeth Harrison was about twenty years of age when she was first seen by the Boston public. "Her youth and beauty, her varied and extensive talent, the uniform propriety of her deportment and above all, the irreproachable purity of her moral character, rendered her a universal favorite."* In 1794 she married Snelling Powell, brother of the manager, and himself subsequently and for many years holding that position. With the single exception of the season of 1800-1, until she took her final leave of the stage in 1828, she was a member of the company. She was an actress of large range and great force, and

* "Personal Memoirs," by J. T. Buckingham, ii: 171.

Joseph T. Buckingham, in December, 1843 (she died on the 10th of that month), writing of her decease, feelingly said :

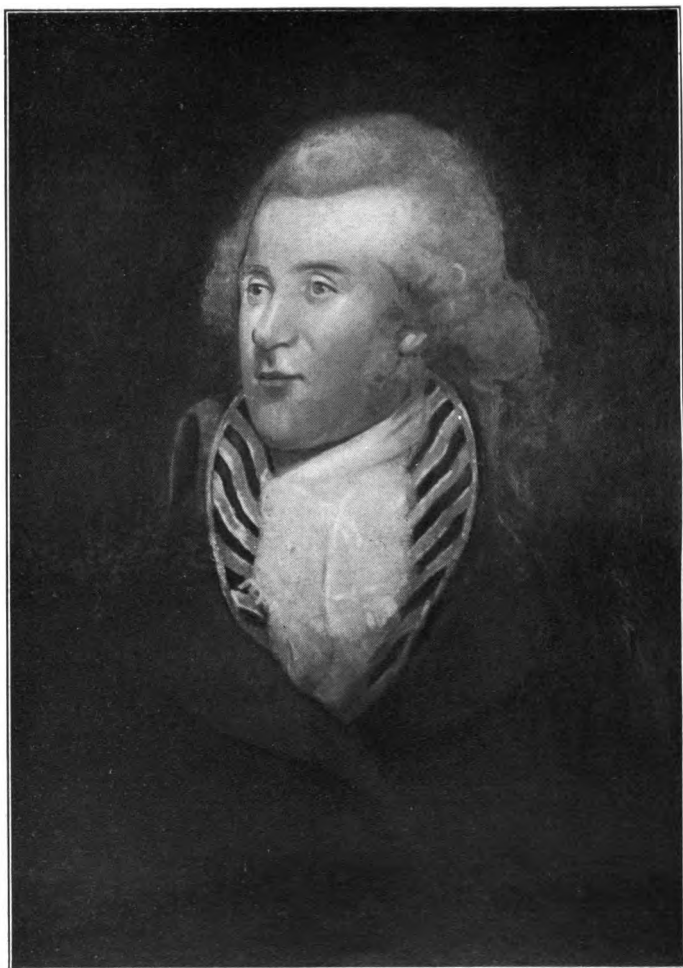
There are yet living many who delight to dwell on her simple but beautiful impersonation of Juliet ; her elegant and fashionable Lady Townley ; the terrible and indignant out-pouring of sorrow in Constance ; the devoted love and heroic resentment of Elvira ; the awfully sublime resolution and subsequent more awful remorse of Lady Macbeth ; the calm dignity of Portia ; the fascinating sprightliness and wit of Letitia Hardy and Lady Teazle.*

Her remains lie peacefully at rest in Forest Hills.

Not much is known of Charles Stuart Powell beyond the fact that he was an actor of some note, and had been a member of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London, where he held a respectable position. On assuming the management of the Federal Street Theatre, he was guaranteed by the trustees of the stockholders, for the services of himself, wife and daughter Cordelia, a salary of £20 weekly ; but liberal as was the stipend for those days, he became bankrupt at the close of the second season, and retired from the management. He was for some time afterwards connected with the theatricals of the town as manager and author, at another establishment. He died in Halifax, N. S., in 1810.

Snelling Powell, a younger brother of Charles Stuart, was destined to make a more enduring mark on the his-

* " Personal Memoirs," ii : 172.



SNELLING POWELL.

trionics of the town. He came of a theatrical family, and was born at Carmarthen, Wales, in 1758. He became a devotee of the stage at an early period of his life ; and was moreover, a practical printer, as have been many actors who have succeeded him. He possessed surprising versatility, sounding all the notes of the drama's gamut from pantomime, through broad farce and light comedy, to high tragedy. He was a man of undoubted probity, and for a generation a most respected citizen ; a member of the Masonic fraternity, and one of the original petitioners for the charters of Columbian Lodge* and of St. Paul's Royal Arch Chapter. With us he had his seasons of successes and reverses, and learned all the vicissitudes of a manager's career. He died in Boston, April 9, 1821, and was buried under Trinity Church.

It is curious to note how history repeats herself, even in the most trivial matters. You will remember perhaps an attempt made not very long ago to induce Congress to pass a bill to prevent the importation of foreign actors

* A very full tribute to the memory of Snelling Powell was printed in the *New England Galaxy* of April 13, 1821, which is copied in full in Heard's History of Columbian Lodge, and in which it is stated that Powell "repeatedly held the office of Master in the Lodge." The records of Columbian Lodge show that he was Senior Deacon in 1795 and '96, and occasionally acted as Marshal, before that became a regular office, but was never Master. We are indebted to the courtesy of Mr. W. Clifton Jones, the present Master, for permission to reproduce the portrait of Powell in costume, which hangs in their room in the Masonic Temple. — ED.

and actresses. As true art is above all petty jealousies, as it belongs to the universe at large, and knows no one country, the attempt was speedily frowned down, and its promoters relegated to that obscurity which they deserved. The idea however, was not a new one. In the "Boston Gazette" of February 24, 1794, appeared this communication : —

Messieurs Printers, — When players are imported from London to surprise the Americans with the wonders of their performances, 'tis time for those of common understanding to bring forward a few from our own country, to show that we can in America produce as ingenious, active men and boys, as can be imported, with all their fine strained notes, and war-like appearances. However, we know from whence arises this importation ! 'Tis to convince us all is good and delightful that comes from Britain.

GARRICK, JR.

This screed was perhaps evoked by the fact that on February 18th, at a meeting of the proprietors an assessment was voted of £33, 6s. and 8d., on each share of stock, payable before the 26th. The entire first season was a success, and progressed to a most satisfactory close.

The second season was opened December 15, 1794, with Shakespeare's "As You Like It," and the Opera of "Rosina." There were a few slight changes in the company, which on the whole was not so effective as that of the first season, although Mrs. Pownall, a singer

of much ability, who had been famous in England as Miss Wrighton and was the mother of the wife of Placide, whom we saw dancing on the tight-rope in the little theatre on Board Alley, was one of the additions, as was a Mr. Taylor, who had a temporary success in the part of Octavian, in the musical play of "The Mountaineers" last done in this city at the Museum by the elder Booth. On January 20, 1795, Shakespeare's "King Henry the Fourth" had its first representation in Boston; and on March 2 a comedy was brought out, "never before performed, written by a citizen of the United States," entitled "The Medium, or Happy Tea-party."

On May 11 "The Contrast," written by Royall Tyler, was played for his benefit. Royall Tyler was the author of a number of dramatic pieces, and a poet of no mean order. He was born in Boston about 1756, and was a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1776. For six years he was an Associate Judge, and for six years more the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Vermont. He was a man of elegant manners, and fine literary tastes. The Rev. Dr. Andrew P. Peabody said of him, "Royall Tyler had few equals, no superiors, among the wits of his day, — a more marked distinction probably than he possessed either at the bar or on the bench." He died in 1826. The season came to a close June 19, 1795, and Charles Powell, who had a slight unpleasantness with the stockholders, retired from the management.

The third season was opened November 2, 1795, Col. John S. Tyler having been entrusted with the management. He retained the regular company, and augmented it with a large part of the New York company, the principal members of which were John Hodgkinson and wife, and Lewis Hallam and wife. Hodgkinson, whose true name was Meadowcraft, acted as the stage manager. The augmented company added greatly to the running expenses, and to meet these the prices of admission were advanced to one dollar for the boxes, seventy-five cents for the pit and slips, and fifty cents for the gallery. Notwithstanding the jealousies existing between the rival companies, the season was a complete success.

In looking over the old advertisements of the theatre I find the announcement made, that on Monday evening, the 9th of November, "will be performed the much admired comedy written by Shakespeare (*sic* !), called 'The School for Scandal.'" On December 11 "Macbeth" was given for the first time here. The cast was a notable one, including Hodgkinson as Macbeth, Hallam as Macduff, and Mrs. Snelling Powell as Lady Macbeth. Many notable plays were produced during the season, and on January 11, 1796, for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Tyler, "A School for Wives" was given for the first time here. The engagement of the New York contingent came to a close January 20, and they left the city. The Boston company continued the per-

formances. January 25th "Othello" was performed, to introduce Mr. J. B. Williamson, who had just arrived in the country, as the Moor. A few months later Mr. Tyler relinquished the management, Williamson was appointed his successor, and the season was carried through until the 16th of May.

During the vacation the theatre was thoroughly renovated, and an agent sent to England to procure fresh talent. Among the engagements were Mr. and Mrs. Giles H. Barrett, the parents of their more celebrated son, "Gentleman George" Barrett, one of the most accomplished comedians that ever graced the stage; Mrs. Chalmers; Mrs. Whitlock, who was one of the Kembles, a sister of Mrs. Siddons, and by consequence an aunt of Fanny Kemble Butler. Mrs. Whitlock had had the honor, when playing in Philadelphia, of appearing before Washington. Last, not least, certainly in one sense, came Mr. and Mrs. Rowson.

From all I am able to glean, Mrs. Rowson was an actress of mediocre ability only, while in other walks of life she was pre-eminent. Her career was a romantic one. Susanna Haswell was born in 1761, the daughter of Lieut. William Haswell of the Royal Navy, and in 1769 she accompanied her father on a voyage to America, where they were shipwrecked on Lovell's Island in our harbor. With her father she subsequently settled in Nantasket, but when the Revolutionary war broke out they returned to England. In 1786 she mar-

ried William Rowson, who was the leader of the band of the Royal Guards. They were engaged by Wignell, the manager of the Philadelphia company, and came to this country in 1793. She closed her histrionic career the evening of her benefit, on which occasion was performed a comedy written by herself, entitled "Americans in England." Besides this she was the author of some twenty-four other miscellaneous works, the most popular of which was the tear-compelling novel, "Charlotte Temple." After leaving the stage she opened a school for young ladies, and afterwards removed to Medford, where her boarding academy was constantly thronged by pupils. Subsequently she moved to Newton and again to Boston. She died in March, 1824.

The season opened September 15, 1796, with Reynold's comedy of "The Dramatist," Chalmers being the Vapid. On January 9, 1797, was brought out for the first time in Boston, Sheridan's comedy, "The Rivals"; and on February 13, for the first time here, "The Merry Wives of Windsor," Williamson as Falstaff; Mrs. Cleveland as Mrs. Page; Mrs. Marshall as Mrs. Ford, and Mrs. Rowson as Dame Quickly.

The Haymarket Theatre, under the management of Charles Stuart Powell and with a superb working company, was opened to the public December 26, 1796, and immediately there sprung up a rivalry, and a bitter one too, between the old and the new theatre. Every

possible attempt was made to crush the audacious intruder. Each shareholder of the Federal Street Theatre had what was known as "his night," when he not only paid all the running expenses, but took a personal pride in having the house full to repletion. To this end as many tickets were sold as could be, and the residue given away to those who would make the pledge never to enter the Haymarket Theatre. The prices of admission to a portion of the house were also reduced. Stock pieces were the order of the night, varied by the first appearance of William Charles White, a resident of the city. The season was brought to a close June 5, 1797.

The next season opened December 6, 1797, with a company strong in many respects, including Charles Powell, wife and daughter, who returned to their first love. Up to January 22, 1798, the theatre was managed by a committee of the stockholders, but now the management was assumed by Messrs. Barrett and Harper, who brought out the classic play "The Roman Father."

On the afternoon of February 2, 1798, the porter of the theatre built the fire in some dressing-rooms situated in the rear. A few hours afterwards a fire broke out, and the building was completely consumed with the exception of the walls. There was but one share of the stock insured, but the energetic managers resolved on rebuilding at once a more elegant and convenient structure.

Meantime some members of the company gave entertainments in what was known as Dearborn's Theatre, in Theatre alley, while others accepted engagements elsewhere. But the new theatre, such as we remember it down to 1852, phoenix-like arose from its ashes, and under the management of John Hodgkinson was opened October 29, 1798, with a prelude called "A First Night's Apology, or All in a Bustle," the comedy by Mrs. Inchbald, "Wives as they were and Maids as they are," and "The Purse, or American Sailor's Return." A dedicatory address was also furnished by Mr. Paine.

The company included many of the old actors and actresses, and among the others was James A. Dickson, who had previously appeared at the Haymarket Theatre, and who remained an honored citizen of Boston up to the day of his death, Friday morning, April 1, 1853. He took a formal leave of the stage April 14, 1817, and some four years later entered upon a mercantile career as an importer of English condiments and so on, and it is to him we are indebted for the first importation of "Day & Martin's Blacking" brought into Boston. Mr. Dickson made occasional appearances after his retirement, his last being for the benefit of Mrs. Powell, May 14, 1821, when he was seen as Sir Robert Bramble, in "The Poor Gentleman;" Will Steady in "The Purse;" and Tag, in "The Spoiled Child," — a broad range of characters for one night. The season closed in April, 1799.

The season of 1799-1800 opened on the 14th of October, 1799, with Mr. Giles L. Barrett as manager. Snelling Powell and Bates, who had gone to the Haymarket, rejoined the company. The comedy for the opening was "Laugh when you can," and in it "Gentleman George" Barrett made his first appearance on the stage as the child. On December 24 the sad tidings reached Boston that Washington was dead. The theatre was closed for a period, but was re-opened on the 10th of January, when a funeral pageant commemorative of the death of the hero was presented. The season, which was entirely devoid of interest, was closed April 28, with Mr. Barrett's benefit, when was played for the first time here, "A Bold Stroke for a Husband." As a manager Barrett had not been successful, and the books were closed with the balance on the wrong side.

For the campaign of 1800-1 the theatre fell into the hands of Mr. C. E. Whitlock, a member of the company as manager, who sailed to England in search of novelties and talent, but as it appears without any great amount of success. His principal attraction from abroad was Mrs. Jones, an excellent singer, and clever actress in comedy, farce, and what was then known as the English opera. She was very young when she came here, and still young as the mother of four children who were entirely dependent on her exertions, when she died in New York, November 11, 1806, at the early age of twenty-four.

The season was opened October 27, 1800, with "Speed the Plough," and the operetta "Rosina." Sheridan's "Pizarro" was brought out in fine style here, for the first time. In March a political row occurred in the theatre, in which, like many other rows, there was more cry than wool. A comic opera, "The Lock and Key," was brought out, in which was a song extolling the bravery of English tars in the engagement of the "Saucy Arethusa" with a French frigate. There was really nothing wrong with the song, which was composed by Prince Hoare, a writer for the stage, and that you may see what trivial things incite to riot, the closing stanzas will suffice : —

On deck five hundred men did dance,
 The stoutest they could find in France,
 We with two hundred did advance,
 On board of the Arethusa.
 Our Captain hailed the Frenchman, "Ho!"
 The Frenchman then cried out, "Hallo!"
 "Bear down, d'ye see,
 To our Admiral's lee."
 "No, no," says the Frenchman, "that can't be."
 "Then I must lug you along with me,"
 Says the saucy Arethusa.

The fight was off the Frenchman's land,
 We forced them back upon their strand,
 For we fought till not a stick would stand
 Of the gallant Arethusa.

And now we've driven the foe ashore,
Never to fight with Britons more,
Let each fill his glass
To his fav'rite lass,
A health to our Captain and officers true,
And all that belong to the jovial crew,
On board of the *Arethusa*.

But party spirit ran high. There was an English party and a French party. For three successive nights there was an attempt to drown the song with hisses, cat calls, and other demonstrations on the one side, while on the other the applause was on the whole more effective. The efforts of the discontented proved vain; the adherents of the theatre triumphed, and the incipient riot was nipped in the bud. The season was brought to a close in May, with a loss of some \$4,000 to Whitlock, while the stockholders were sufferers to a much greater extent.

The season of 1801-2 opened under happier auspices, and there was the dawning of a brighter day. Snelling Powell and J. Harper became joint managers, and the opening was on November 30. The greatest matter of interest during the season was the appearance of Mr. Cromwell, a native American, who I regret to say did not fulfill the expectations formed of him, though it was said he had visited England, and appeared at Drury Lane. The season was continued to July 4, and to the joy of all interested there was a slight margin of profit.

The season of 1802-3 found Snelling Powell the sole manager, which position he held, with profit to himself and entire satisfaction to the stockholders, for four successive seasons. The house was opened on October 27, and as the Haymarket Theatre, which had been steadily on the decline, was sold at auction and taken down early in March, 1803, the older and the better theatre had everything its own way. The company was an excellent one, and among the new-comers was the charming Mrs. Darley, who as Miss Elizabeth Westray, had taken captive the hearts of all the town at the Haymarket. Dickson gave evidence of his surprising talent as Sir Anthony Absolute, and the entire season was a triumph.

The events of the season of 1803-4, were the appearance of Mrs. Jones, after a four years' absence; Henry Whitlock, then only sixteen years of age, played Young Norval with much success. John Bernard, for years a prime favorite in Boston, and an actor of great ability, became a member of the company. The comedy of "The Poor Gentleman" made a great hit. On March 1, 1804, the comedy "What is she, or the Female Stranger," was played for the first time here; and on the 8th, for the first time, the comedy "Folly as it flies." On March 22, Deborah Gannett, "The American heroine," who served three years as a private soldier in the Continental Army during the war, at the request of a number of citizens appeared upon the stage and related her narrative. The season was brought to a close

June 7, 1804, when Powell delivered a valedictory address.

On the evening of Wednesday, October 27, was opened the season of 1804-5, with "The Poor Gentleman," and "The Purse." The business was more than satisfactory. December 29 a young gentleman made his first appearance on any stage, as "Young Norval"; and nothing more, of any great interest occurred, until Thomas Apthorpe Cooper made his first appearance at this theatre (he had previously appeared at the Haymarket) as Hamlet. His engagement was a great success, and shortly after, the season was brought to a close—the benefits having been unusually well patronized.

The season of 1805-6, the last of Snelling Powell's sole management, opened in October with "Speed the Plough," and must have been an unusually interesting one. Mr. and Mrs. Poe, the parents of the poet, were among the new faces for a time. They were from the Virginia theatres, making their first appearances in this as Henry and Miss Blandford. They were fair artists; Poe possessed a full, manly voice of considerable extent, while Mrs. Poe made a favorable impression. She was born to the stage, and her maiden name was Elizabeth Arnold. A far greater interest attaches to them however, from the fact that they were the parents of that erratic genius and gifted poet, Edgar Allan Poe, who was born in this city February 19, 1809.

Mr. Cooper again appeared, and Mr. Luke Usher also joined the stock company ; though not an actor of the first order, he was regarded as a valuable acquisition. Darley as a lover was always pleasing, while as a singer he was regarded as perhaps the first in the country. His wife, another member, may be said to have shared the leading business with Mrs. Powell, — for while the latter played Lady Macbeth, Desdemona, and Juliana in “The Honeymoon,” the former appeared as Ophelia, Rosalind, etc. Mrs. Darley died in Philadelphia as late as 1849 ; her husband had returned to England, and died in London twenty years earlier.

Up to this time the language of the old plays was spoken with all its coarseness ; but an attempt was now made to purify the stage. In a well-considered newspaper article the writer said : —

While we express an ardent desire for the prosperity of the theatre as a school of nature, as a mirror in which mankind are seen, we wish to check what too often exists, — a propensity to that kind of wit which savors of indelicacy. All that is written should not be spoken. Cannot the manager erase ? Why then must innocence blush and modesty hide her face ? The exhibitions of the stage, though they borrow the sublimity of Jove, the strength of Hercules, and the beauty of Venus, should never forsake the chastity and refinement of Diana.

Good advice, which might be properly applied to some of the meretricious pieces of the present day.

The season lasted for seven months, and was more than successful dramatically and financially. Many pieces had their first representation in the city, notably "The Honeymoon," Shakespeare's "Katherine and Petruchio," "Twelfth Night" and "Coriolanus" for the benefit of Cooper. During his engagement, Cooper appeared in such parts as Falstaff, Leon in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife," Hamlet, Pierre in "Venice Preserved," Macbeth and Othello; his acting in the latter was spoken of as the "finest performance ever seen on the American stage."

The season of 1806-7 opened under the management of Powell, Bernard and Dickson.

On October 24 "Richard the Third" was produced for the purpose of introducing Master Loring, sixteen years old, a native of this city, as the Duke of Gloucester. The boy was said to imitate the acting of Cooper, and in this, was somewhat successful. The performance as a whole was uneven, yet the critics said, "considering his age and advantages, it was creditable to his judgment and talent."

John Bernard arrived with re-enforcements for the company, bringing with him Caulfield from Drury Lane Theatre, Mrs. Stanley and others. October 29 Mrs. Stanley opened as Letitia Hardy, in "The Belle's Stratagem." Her form was handsome, her gestures easy and graceful, and it was said of her, "never has the Boston stage been trodden by an actress superior to her in ele-

gance of dress and dignity of manners." Her acting, however, savored a little too much of the tragic. On the 31st, Caulfield made his first bow as Rolla. He played the usual round of leading tragic parts, and Mrs. Stanley, who played the opposites, was more than successful as Jane Shore and Belvedera, in "Venice Preserved." On January 19, a gentleman of Boston, whose name I have been unable to ascertain, made his first theatrical attempt as Earl Osmond, in that thrilling melodrama of Monk Lewis, "The Castle Spectre"—the first play, by the way, that I ever witnessed—and succeeded much beyond expectation. Cooper played a round of his characters, and cleared by his engagement \$2,000, which was a large sum in those days. February 18, 1807, James Fennell, an actor of signal ability, made his first appearance in Boston as Zanga in "Revenge," and he subsequently played Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet, and Lear.

At the close of the theatrical season, Fennell gave a series of Shakespearian readings at the Exchange Coffee House,—the first Shakespearian readings ever given in Boston. Previous to his appearing here he established some salt works in Connecticut, which depleted his pockets, and caused his return to the stage. He was a extravagant liver, and addicted to the bowl, from the effects of which he became so utterly broken down in mind and body that he died in abject poverty in Philadelphia, where he had once been a great favorite.

The season of 1807-8 was opened early in September, the principal attraction being a Mr. Webster, a fine singer who had previously given some concerts, to the delight of the towns-people. Not long afterwards he left the town in a hurry, and under a cloud. Twaits, an excellent show comedian from the South, was added to the company. He was manager of the Richmond theatre at the time it was burned. Fennell played a round of his characters. Mr. Taylor made his first appearance November 11, in the doleful tragedy of "George Barnwell," and on the 20th, Mrs. Anne Warren, the second wife of Warren, the father of our lamented comedian William Warren, made her first appearance in Boston, as Belvedera in "Venice Preserved." As Anne Brunton she had met with great success at Covent Garden Theatre. She took for her first husband Robert Merry, and with him she came to this country under engagement to the Philadelphia theatre in 1796. Merry died in 1798, and in 1803 his widow married Wignell, the Philadelphia manager, who died seven weeks after. A widow for the second time, she married William Warren, August 15, 1806. She died in child-birth in Alexandria, Va., June 28, 1808. Her engagement here was for one week only, but her success was so great that her share of the receipts amounted to \$1,600.

On January 25, 1808, Cooper began an engagement, Fennell playing seconds to him, and Mrs. Stanley being

great actor. He was dissipated, but he had genius. He was a worthy rival of John Philip Kemble, and by many thought superior to "Black Jack." He scarcely had a moral attribute, but he could attract the largest audience and hold them by the power of his marvellous art. He was seen at his best in Iago, in Shylock, and in Sir Pertinax Macsycophant in "The Man of the World." His engagement lasted for three weeks, and he took nearly \$4,000 as his share of the receipts.

During the recess preceding the season of 1811-12 the theatre was refitted and the interior was improved. Cooke reappeared in December, but one night of his engagement he was so badly intoxicated as to be obliged to give up before the completion of the play. As a consequence, during the remainder of the engagement, the receipts were greatly diminished.

I pass over several seasons devoid of special interest and come to that of 1816-17, previous to which the theatre had been again refitted. On October 9 "Guy Mannering" was played for the first time here, with Mrs. Powell as Meg Merrilies; Dickson as Dominie Sampson, and Mrs. Moore, formerly Mrs. Woodham, who had previously delighted all by her Lady Teazle, as Julia Mannering. William Pelby, subsequently the manager of the National Theatre, became a member of the stock company. John Bernard returned, and was warmly welcomed. West's company of Equestrians brought out "Timour the Tartar" finely. On April 14,

1817, the stage met with an irreparable loss, in the retirement of James A. Dickson, although for several years afterwards he continued to have an interest in the management.

The season of 1817-18 brought John Duff into the management in connection with Powell and Dickson. Two English singers of note occasionally appeared, Inclendon the tenor, and Henry Phillips the baritone, who returned to the city some years later. Cooper made his annual appearance, but the season was mainly carried on by the stock company, as there was very little need of tragic stars, with John Duff at the head of the company.

Early in September the season of 1818-19, was opened with "The Honeymoon" and "The Bee Hive." The stock company remained substantially the same. November 30 James W. Wallack the elder, in his prime one of the finest actors of the romantic school who ever trod the stage, opened as Rolla, and played a round of leading tragic characters. He was followed by Mr. and Mrs. Bartley, actors of great repute.

Nothing of very great interest occurred in the theatre until February 12, 1821, when that great dramatic luminary Edmund Kean made his first bow to a Boston audience as the Duke of Gloucester. He was engaged for nine nights, and re-engaged for six more. The houses were crowded nightly, and he brought more money than ever was before received at the treasury in

a like period. The theatre this season was destined to meet with a great loss by the death of its honored manager, Snelling Powell. Of late years he had not been seen much upon the stage, devoting himself exclusively to the cares of management. During this season, Master William L. Ayling, still remembered by some of us as an excellent actor, and one of the original managers of the Howard Athenaeum, made his first appearance on the stage.

After Powell's death his widow became interested in the management with Dickson and Duff. Kean returned to the theatre Wednesday, May 23, 1821, and opened as Lear to a fair house. It was late in the season, many people were away, and the business was not such as it would have been under other conditions. On the third night of his engagement, when "Richard the Third" was announced, he refused to appear, alleging that the audience was too small. He left the city and sailed from New York for Liverpool on June 7, following.

On June 16, 1821, the proprietors were granted an Act of Incorporation; the following season was opened September 19, 1821, under the management of Kilner and Clarke, with "The Foundling of the Forest." Prominent in the company were Mrs. Drummond, afterwards famous as Mrs. George H. Barrett, and G. Mills Brown, whom some of you may remember from his great impersonation of John Mildmay at the Howard

Athenaeum a few years ago. On the 28th Kilner appeared as Sir Anthony Absolute. For years he was a great favorite, until he gave up the stage and took to farming in Ohio, where he died. Cooper played an engagement, and so did Mrs. Holman, a superior singer, who was supported by Henry Phillips. Samuel Woodworth, who wrote "The Old Oaken Bucket," produced "The Deed of Gift," which was "damned with faint praise."

But the great event of the season took place May 6, 1822, when Junius Brutus Booth made his first appearance here in "Richard the Third." He was then in his twenty-sixth year, eminently handsome, for it was long before his nose had been flattened out of shape by a hand-iron in the hands of his friend Thomas Flynn, or he had lost the music of his voice, not as that old reprobate Jack Falstaff had lost his, "by halloing anthems," but by indulging in "potations pottle deep." He was a wonderful actor down to the day of his death, which occurred November 30, 1852, and his last appearance in Boston was made at the Museum, as Richard, October 31, 1851. He was the author of the play of "Ugolino," which occasionally, but very rarely, sees the footlights.

During the season of 1822-23 Mr. George H. Barrett, already mentioned as making his first appearance as a child, became a member of the company, as did the famous Mrs. Waring and the still more famous Henry

J. Finn, who, on August 16, 1822, had married Elizabeth Powell, the only one of Snelling Powell's children who adopted the stage as a profession. Finn began as a full-fledged tragedian, but we remember him as the best comedian and the most versatile actor that ever trod the Boston boards. He opened on October 28, 1822, as Richard, and played a round of tragic parts. I need not follow his career. It is perhaps enough to say that he perished in Long Island Sound, on the occasion of the burning of the ill-fated steamer Lexington, on the night of January 13, 1840. Charles Matthews the elder appeared on Thursday, December 26, opening as Goldfinch and Mons. Tonson. For his share of his engagement he received \$4,600. The theatre closed late in April.

The season of 1823-24 opened September 15. Keene the singer, Adams, Pelby, Cooper, Booth, and Conway played star engagements. The Shakespeare Jubilee was brought out, and Charles Sprague won the prize for an ode written for the occasion. June 20, 1825, Lafayette visited the theatre, when "Charles the Second" was played. On December 2, the famous Kean riot occurred, upon which it is unnecessary to enlarge. It was the outcome of Kean's insulting treatment of his audience during his previous engagement. The theatre was much damaged ; Kean escaped with his life and soon after left the country never to return. He it was who pronounced the town "the literary emporium of the new

world." After his departure the season was carried to the close, though not with much eclat.

The season of 1826-27, which opened September 25, was marked by two notable events; the first was the appearance of the greatest actor we have had in Boston for half a century, William Charles Macready, who began an engagement October 30, 1826, at which Daniel Webster was present; the second was the first appearance of the greatest of American actors, Edwin Forrest, February 5, 1827, who played Damon to Finn's Pythias. Macready re-appeared at the close of Forrest's engagement.

The season of 1827-8 opened September 17, with "The Rivals" and "The Young Widow." Meantime the Tremont Theatre was in the course of construction, and its opening announced for the 24th of the month. Here was a new and formidable rival. How was it to come out of the struggle? A superb company was engaged; the strongest of the old members retained, while the new comers included Thomas Flynn, George H. Andrews, Walton, Mr. King, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard, Miss Rivers, and the versatile Miss Rock, who died in Albany a year or two ago. James H. Hackett and Forrest appeared in star engagements, and on November 19, 1829, the famous Clara Fisher, as Mrs. James G. Maeder, took the city by storm, by her performance of Albina Mandeville in the comedy of "The Will." Her engagement was a triumph. There was unusual

competition between the Federal Street and the Tremont, but it was generally conceded that in both stars and stock the old house maintained a decided superiority.

On its opening of the season of 1828-29, on September 22, the management reduced the prices of admission, thus making a tacit confession that the new theatre, which was managed with tact and energy, was, to use a nautical expression, "Working to the windward." The stars were few and not of great attractiveness, and there was a troupe of Parisian dancers, and a season of French opera. But the manager could not stem the strong tide of the opposition of his competitor. Night after night there was a beggarly array of empty boxes, and the stockholders were weary with their losses. The actors could not draw their salaries, and sought engagements elsewhere, and in despair the doors of the theatre were closed. After this two or three spasmodic attempts were made to infuse new life into the old body, but the success was only temporary.

In the summer of 1834, Harrington, the ventriloquist, gave exhibitions, and then came a marked change; the theatre was converted into the "Odeon," under which name it was opened on August 5, 1835, when the Hon. Samuel A. Eliot delivered an address, and the "Boston Academy" furnished the music. After a lapse of about fourteen years, during which it was occupied by several religious societies, and at least one irreligious body.—

the notorious Abner Kneeland and his followers — the Lowell Institute, the Boston Lyceum, and other associations for literary, scientific and benevolent purposes, it was restored to the legitimate use for which it was originally built, and opened to the public on Monday evening, August 24, 1846, by Mr. Oliver C. Wyman. In the "Courier" of that morning, appeared an "Address" written by the late Rev. Nathaniel L. Frothingham, to be recited at the opening, but never offered to the management for that purpose; it noted the changes in the uses of the building since its close as a dramatic temple.*

Mr. Wyman had summoned to his aid a most efficient company, and it was his laudable intention to bring back to the theatre the glory of the old days. There appeared to be something peculiarly fitting in the idea, the more so as he had taken to wife one of the daughters of Snelling Powell. He summoned to his aid such well known actors as Mr. and Mrs. John Gilbert, Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey W. Bland from London, George H. Barrett, Thomas Placide, John Brougham, William M. Flemming, Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Cramer and her daughter, Mrs. W. H. Smith, Mrs. Muller, pretty Miss Wagstaff, and hosts of others, all favorites.

The interior had been completely reconstructed and improved under the superintendence of Mr. D. P. Ells-

* The lines, which were evidently written in some haste, are given in full in Buckingham's "Personal Memoirs," ii: 188-191. — ED.

worth, and a new act-drop, "Athens as it is," painted by Stockwell. The opening address, written by Frances Sargent Osgood, was spoken by John Gilbert. It was conventional in its style, and abounded in allusions to the heroes and heroines of the Shakespearian drama. I quote the concluding stanza : —

Not these alone ; creations rich and rare
Of *modern* genius, here your smiles shall share ;
Here the lithe spirit of the dance shall spring
Like an embodied Zephyr on the wing.
Here too the soul of Song shall float in air
And on its wings your hearts, enchanted, bear.
Ah ! yield to them, to us, the meed we claim —
Your smiles to light the path that leads to fame.
So shall this life of mockery seem more sweet,
And flowers shall rise to rest our pilgrim feet ;
While from our lips, inspired by hope divine,
Like fire shall flow the bard's melodious line !

Then came Morton's comedy of "Speed the Plough," which seems to have been a favorite play for opening-night at this theatre, strongly cast, and the farce of "The Irish Lion." The house was crowded, and there were some three thousand more applications for tickets than could be accommodated. The applause was generous, the performances more than satisfactory. Our newspapers were not very enterprising in the line of dramatic criticism at the time, but we have the assurance of one at least, that "the performances reached to

a late hour, but the audience remained unbroken to the last," which is no doubt accounted for by the fact that there was no scrambling for late trains ; or perhaps the audiences were better mannered than at present.

At the beginning of the third week of the season came that sterling actor, Henry Placide. The most notable event of the engagement was his appearance with his brother Thomas, as the Two Dromios in Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors." September 12, James W. Wallack followed in a round of characters, including "Don Caesar de Bazan," which has never since been presented so magnificently in Boston. Then came the Seguin Opera Troupe for three weeks, and Seguin astonished all by his "double G" in "The Postilion of Longumeau." October 19 Charles Kean came with his wife, young, beautiful and captivating, the famous Ellen Tree. At the close Wallack returned for a single week ; and then, on November 16, for three weeks came "the great Alcides" of the American stage, Edwin Forrest, then in the very zenith of his fame and the heyday of his popularity.

It was during this engagement of Forrest that an incident took place which is thus related by Mr. William W. Clapp in his interesting "Record of the Boston Stage" : "On an evening when Mr. Forrest was performing, some gentlemen, who had indulged in rather more than their heads could conveniently bear, occupied the stage box, and were so boisterous in their talk as to

interrupt Mr. Forrest, who coming down from the stage met 'Acorn' [the *nom de plume* of the late James Oakes, Forrest's lifetime friend] behind the scenes, and at once remonstrated. 'Never mind them,' said Acorn; 'they have been requested to keep more quiet, but the truth is — they are as tight as peeps!' Mr. Forrest, misunderstanding the reply, remarked that he didn't know who Titus A. Peep was, but he was bound to have him put out if he made any further disturbance." The joke took wings and flew all over the town, and for weeks almost the only query was, "Who is Titus A. Peep?" John Brougham, with his facile pen, seized upon the incident and turned it into an extravaganza, which was the occasion of much mirth at his benefit. But who *was* Titus A. Peep? He was a young man of brilliant parts, the son of a most respectable gentleman, who afterwards attained the distinction of being a member of the Governor's Council. His besetting sin was a too frequent indulgence in the circean cup, which followed him through life. He died a few years ago, in all probability by his own hand.

Forrest was followed by James E. Murdock, who in turn was succeeded by Henry Placide and that perfect embodiment of genteel comedy, Mrs. George H. Barrett, to have witnessed whose performances was indeed a liberal education. I make no misstatement when I say that such characters, in so far as the Boston stage is concerned, as Lady Teazle, and Letitia Hardy, in

"The Belle's Stratagem," were entombed with Mrs. Barrett. Next came a series of stock performances suited to the holidays, in which that delight of youthful days, "The Forty Thieves," was prominent. Then followed the season of benefits, which lasted until the theatre was closed.

Shortly before the end of the season, Mr. Wyman retired from the management with a personal loss of over \$20,000. He had labored hard for the success of his venture, but without avail. The stars took the lion's share of the receipts, while the community was by no means so generous in its patronage as it should have been to so worthy an enterprise. Mr. John Gilbert has informed me that after Mr. Wyman's retirement there was an attempt to run the establishment as a Commonwealth. After settling up the first week's business, the share of himself and wife, including his services as stage manager, was \$4.12; that of John Brougham was 75 cents. With Irish recklessness, Brougham invited the company over to Mrs. Dunlap's, in Theatre alley, and there spent all his week's wage, and much more too, in giving them a substantial treat.

The theatre did not long remain idle, but found a new lessee in the person of the favorite National Theatre actor, Charles R. Thorne, who re-opened the establishment on June 21, 1847, with the celebrated troupe of Viennoise dancing children, who held possession until the fourth of July, when the season was ended. Thorne

resumed his regular dramatic season on August 16, following, with a company by no means so strong as that of Wyman, but yet entitled to some consideration. Among the star attractions were Wallack, Forrest, James Anderson, an English opera company under the management of Madame Anna Bishop, and the elder Booth, who played Othello to the Iago of his son, Junius Brutus Booth. Thorne relinquished the management at the end of the season.

And now the life of the old theatre became an uncertain one, and again it was unquestionably on the decline. Welch, Nathans and Delevan gave circus performances. There was a flash of legitimacy, which expired in the brief space of three weeks, when Bland and Skerritt as managers introduced Charlotte Cushman, flushed with her European triumphs. It was then that that honored actor, Charles W. Coudock, made his first appearances in Boston.

Next came a series of cheap and vulgar performances by fellows of no mark in their profession, with the price of admission reduced to twenty-five cents for the best seats. Parodi appeared in Italian Opera, which didn't pay, and McAllister, the magician, for a number of weeks nightly suspended his wife in air. For a brief period the Ravels made the old Temple once more brilliant, and then the light began to flicker. A number of costume balls were given, which proved to be foul orgies, disgraceful alike to the city and the participants,

and finally, on April 13, 1852, the land and building were advertised for sale at auction. The price bid, however, was not deemed sufficient, and the offer was withdrawn. A few days subsequently the property was purchased by Merriam & Brewer.

April 22 the National Theatre was burned down, while Mrs. Sinclair, the divorced wife of Edwin Forrest, supported by George Vandenhoff, was playing an engagement there. By the courtesy of the owners of the property, and the consent of Messrs. Merriam & Brewer (for the papers had not yet been passed), the old theatre was again opened on that night by the National company, and performances given until the afternoon of Saturday, May 8, when the engagement of Mrs. Sinclair was completed. The lady had taken her benefit the night previous, on which occasion the last legitimate dramatic performance, made up of the second act of "The Lady of Lyons," and "The School for Scandal," was given within its walls. Mr. William Shimmin, an old and honored resident of the city was present, and witnessed the final descent of the green curtain on a performance by a regular dramatic company, as he had on February 3, 1794, something more than fifty-eight years previously, seen it rise there for the first time.

But there was yet to be one more performance, for on Saturday night the Aurora Dramatic Club, a company of amateurs, appeared in "Speed the Plough" and "A Nabob for an Hour," for the benefit of the members of

the National Company who had lost by the fire. But the attendance was small, the receipts meagre, and yielded nothing to assuage their sufferings. On Monday, the 10th, the properties and fixtures were disposed of by auction and the work of demolition began.

Will you pardon me if I suggest that it would be a very gratifying proceeding on the part of your Society, should you cause to be inserted in the building now occupying the site, a memorial tablet to commemorate the spot on which stood the first theatre legitimately devoted to the drama in Boston, — a theatre moreover, whose history, take it for all in all, is most interesting.

“Old Drury” is a thing of the past. The once loved theatre,

“Dear as the hearthstone of a father’s home,”

with all its vicissitudes, all its glories and all its triumphs, has gone. But the Stage still remains with us, one of the most cherished of our institutions, and will continue to do so, “to the last syllable of recorded time.” It is one of the most potent, and certainly the most popular of our educators, for in holding “as it were the mirror up to nature, it shows virtue her own features, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure,” thus teaching us, with a stronger accentuation and more indelible impressiveness than any university, that

“The proper study of mankind is man.”

And the players, too! Are they not in very truth
“the abstract and brief chronicle of the times;” and do
they not, indeed, hold the spell

“ Which only acting lends,—
The youngest of the sister arts,
Where all their beauty blends :
For ill can poetry express
Full many a tone of thought sublime,
And painting, mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance of time.
But by the mighty actor brought,
Illusion's perfect triumphs come,—
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And sculpture to be dumb !”



NOTE.

THE print of the Old Federal Street Theatre is reproduced from a copper-plate engraving by Abel Bowen, the original of which appeared in Snow's History of Boston (1825); it shows the Federal Street front and the side on Franklin Street, with a glimpse of the little Park once opposite what was known as the "Tontine Crescent," on the southerly side of Franklin Place. The spire is that of the first Cathedral of the Holy Cross, built by Bishop Cheverus after designs by Charles Bulfinch, and consecrated in 1803 ; the house on the corner at the left was occupied at one time as a convent by the Ursuline nuns, and later by the Clergy of the Cathedral, until the property was finally sold for business purposes.

**THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE
IN NEW ENGLAND**

BEFORE THE YEAR 1700

**BY
FRANCIS H. BROWN, M. D.**



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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL
CHAMBER, OLD STATE HOUSE, APRIL 11, 1905, BY

FRANCIS H. BROWN, M. D.



In those early days of our country's history between Jamestown and the Declaration of Independence, when three million colonists were sparsely scattered over the thirteen States on the Atlantic seaboard, the doctors apparently had a reasonable proportion. Some three thousand or three thousand five hundred are supposed to have ministered to the wants of the people. Of these it is estimated that not more than four hundred had received the degree of Doctor in Medicine from a medical school, and these had been educated in the schools of Europe.

In Savage's Dictionary the names of one hundred and thirty-four practitioners are found among those who came to the New England Colonies before 1692.

Mather estimated that forty thousand persons emigrated to New England in ten or twelve years following the first settlement, bringing with them in money, merchandise and animals the value of nearly £200,000. "Upon the whole," Mather says, "it has been computed that the four settlements of Plymouth, the Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut and New Haven, all of which were accomplished before the beginning of the Civil Wars, drained England of four or five hundred thousand pounds in money, and, if the persecution of the Pilgrims had continued twelve years longer, it is thought that a fourth part of the riches of the kingdom would have passed out of it through this channel."*

It may be well to consider for a moment the condition of medicine in Europe at the time.

The seventeenth century was the era of the schools in medicine known as the Rosicrucians and the Eclectic Conciliators ; of those who governed medicine by mathematics, and of the humoral pathologists, advancing theories which we of to-day should call utter charlatan-ism. The age, however, was pregnant with those first advances in medicine which in later years have unfolded into our present state of rational medicine. Harvey had in 1619 announced to his pupils his theory of the circulation of the blood, — a discovery attacked and contested with the greatest acrimony by the learned men

* S. A. Drake, *History of Middlesex County*, I: 47.

of that period ; and it was remarked as an evidence of obstinate adherence to preconceived opinions that no physician in Europe who had reached forty years, even to the end of his life, adopted Harvey's theory.

Sir Kenelm Digby's sympathetic powder of that day, applied, not to the wound, but to the weapon which had inflicted it, was thought to have a marvellous effect in restoring the injured man to soundness. To this superstition Walter Scott, in the "*Lay of the Last Minstrel*," alludes : —

But she has ta'en the broken lance
And washed it from the clotted gore,
And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.
William of Deloraine, in trance,
Whene'er she turned it round and round,
Twisted as if she galled his wound ;
Then to her maidens she did say
That he should be whole man and sound.

It was in this century that Bartholini, Malpighi and Steno — names well preserved in our professional nomenclature — made important investigations in anatomy ; Sylvius, Willis and others, worked on the brain and nervous system ; Newton, Kepler, Descartes, determined the properties of the various parts of the eye, and Scheiner demonstrated the fact that the retina is the true organ of sight. Ambroise Paré, originally a barber-surgeon, who could boast that he had been surgeon to four kings of France in succession, made great advance

in the treatment of gun-shot wounds, and taught the use of the ligature. So that, although it may seem to us that gross ignorance of medicine and surgery prevailed at the time when our fathers came to this shore, evidently light was beginning to break, and, in spite of many crudities, much over-dosing, and frequent hampering of the *vis medicatrix naturae*, our ancestors seem to have struggled through in spite of the doctors, and we are here to-day manifest witnesses of their pre-existence, — that they ate, drank and slept, and brought forth sturdy children.

Very naturally abuses grew up in the practice of medicine by improper persons, so great that the Legislature of Massachusetts, May 2, 1649, passed a law restraining those who would otherwise have unnecessarily perilled the lives or comfort of the inhabitants.

Forasmuch as the Law of God allows no man to impare the Life, or Limbs of any Person, but in a judicial way : It is therefore Ordered, That no person or persons whatsoever, employed at any time about the bodies of men, women or Children, for preservation of life or health ; as Chirurgeons, Midwives, Physicians or others, presume to exercise, or put forth any act contrary to the known approved Rules of Art, in each Mystery and occupation, nor exercise any force, violence or cruelty upon, or towards the body of any, whether young or old (no, not in the most difficult and desperate cases) without the consent of such as are skillfull in the same Art. * * *

William Douglas in his Summary says: "When I first arrived in New England, I asked a noted facetious practitioner what was their general method of practice; he told me their practice was very uniform, — bleeding, vomiting, blistering, purging, anodynes, etc.; if the illness continued, there was *repetendi*; and finally *murderandi*! Nature was never to be consulted, or allowed to have any concern in the affair. . . . In our plantation a practitioner bold, rash, impudent, a liar born and educated, has much the advantage of an honest, cautious, modest gentleman. In general the physical practice in our Colonies is so perniciously bad that, excepting in surgery and some very acute cases, it is better to let Nature, under a proper regimen, take her course, than to trust to the honesty and sagacity of the practitioner. Our American practitioners are so rash and officious, the saying in the Apocrypha* may with much propriety be applied to them: 'He that sinneth before his Maker let him fall into the hand of the physician.'" All of which seems a libel on our early physicians, the majority of whom were probably good, God-fearing men, albeit they were ignorant of anaesthesia, asepsis, and the last news of bacteriological evolution.

In the organization of the Companies sent out from England to people the Western wilds, the founders recognized the need which would arise for medical and

* Ecclus. xxxviii : 15.

surgical skill among the colonists, and provided in many cases educated physicians to meet this need. The Company which sent out Endicott to Salem thus instructed him:—“We have entertained Lambert Wilson, a chirurgeon, to remain with you in the service of the Plantation; with whom we are all agreed that he shall serve this Company and the other planters that live in the Plantation for three years, and in that time apply himself to cure not only of such as come hence for the general and particular accounts, but also for the Indians as shall from time to time be directed by yourself or your successor and the rest of the Council, and moreover he is to educate and instruct in his art one or more youth such as you and the said Council shall appoint, that may be useful to him, and if occasion require succeed him in the Plantation; which youth or youths fit to learn that profession let [him] be placed with him, of which Mr. Hugesson’s son, if his father approve thereof, may be one, the rather because he hath been trained up in literature; but if not he, then such others as you judge most fittest.”

Young, in making this quotation in his *New England Chronicle*, says:—“We have here the embryo of a medical school, undoubtedly the first ever planted on the continent of America; whether it went into operation or how it succeeded we are not informed.”

Dr. John R. Quinan, in his *Medical Annals of Baltimore* (1884), states that in June, 1608, William Russell,

"Dr. of Physicke," and Anthony Bagnall,* "chirurgion," accompanied Captain John Smith in his exploration of the Chesapeake and his discovery of the Patapsco River. They are, perhaps, the first physicians who practiced the healing art within the limits of the United States of to-day.

Dr. John R. Ham states that in 1631, Dr. Renald Fernald was sent out to New Hampshire by Captain John Mason, and settled at Portsmouth; Dr. Samuel Fuller came to Plymouth in the *Mayflower*, and William Palgrave and Giles Firmin were of the company which accompanied Winthrop, in the *Arbella*, to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Others soon followed; so that before the year 1700 many had landed in Boston and the surrounding towns, and were engaged in the practice of the profession. I have somewhat detailed accounts of about one hundred such.

The practice of medicine was not, however, confined to those regularly or exclusively educated for that profession. In many cases the ministers of the Gospel, before leaving their homes in the old country, had acquired such a considerable amount of information in the art of medicine, as to make them very respectable practitioners, so that they could exercise the healing art over body and soul. Indeed, it has been somewhat difficult in studying the subject, to determine, in many

* Sewall, 1825: 48.

cases, whether the persons whose biographies are given were properly clergymen or physicians. Some left one profession to take up exclusively the duties of the other, and, in the sparsely settled regions, the superior intelligence of both ministers and magistrates was constantly called into requisition to aid the colonists in their neighborhood. As the priests of Egypt and Greece, in the early dawn of medicine, collected and preserved what was known of the healing art, so in the early history of our country the same association naturally exists. Physical and moral and spiritual evil are so closely associated, that those who are administering relief to the one cannot be regardless of the other. The analogy to this dual character of physician and spiritual adviser is carried out at the present day, where the physician, in desperate cases, finds no wiser or better assistant than in the intelligent priest or Protestant minister, called in to tide over the patient from the life on earth to the life beyond.

This mingling of the two professions continued for nearly a century after the first settling of New England. One of the best of this class of men was the Rev. Jared Eliot, who was born in 1685 and died in 1763. He was a graduate of Yale College in 1706, and from 1709 to his death was minister at Killingworth, in Connecticut. He published several memoirs, and was so devoted to his clerical duties that it was said that "for forty successive years, in the course of his ministry, he never

omitted preaching either at home or abroad on the Lord's day." He was the most eminent physician of his day in Connecticut. He was so skillful in his management of chronic diseases especially, that he was frequently called in consultation to Boston, Newport and other places.*

Beside the Clergy, some of the first Governors and magistrates of New England also practiced medicine. John Winthrop of Massachusetts, and his son the Governor of Connecticut, and his other son Waitstill, were of this number. Of the Connecticut John, Cotton Mather says "he was furnished with *noble* medicines, which he most charitably and generously gave away upon all occasions."†

It is much to be doubted if the advice which the early practitioners received from their friends in the old country availed much to the sanitary condition of the Pilgrims and the Puritans. Witness the precepts inculcated by Sir Kenelm Digby in his letter to John Winthrop of Connecticut, written in Paris, January 26, 1656:—

In the meane time let me tell you of an Easie medicine of mine owne that J haue feene do miraculous cures in all fortes of vlcers, and in knitting Soddainly broken bones: w^{ch} J conceive it doth by carrying awaye by vrine the ichorous matter

* By the Yale Catalogue, he appears to have been a Fellow of the Royal Society of London.

† Mather's *Magnalia*.

that infesteth such maladies; and then nature healeth and knitteth apace, when nothing hindereth her. It is this: Beate to subtile powder one ounce of crabbes eyes (in latin called *Oculi cancrorum*) then putt vpon it in a high glasse (because of the Ebullition) four ounces of strong vinegar. It will instantly boyle up extremly; let it stand till all be quiett: then straine it through a fine linnen: and of this liquor (^{w^{ch}} will then taste like dead beere without any sharpnesse) give two spoonfulls att a time to drink three times: and you shall see a strange effect in a weeke or two.

From the receipt book of Dr. John Wadsworth of Duxbury, a successful practitioner and a prominent character in his native town, — belonging to George Eliot Richardson: —

This Refipt cost me fifty pounds by Count and I pray y^t you would not Expose the same without a good fee. this for a canker proves exelant and if in Time applyd will cure a Cancer humor Take 3 frogs and put y^m into a deep arthen Bafen and power upon them as much swete oyle as will cover them put y^m into a hot oven and lett y^m stand a quarter of an hour then turn off the Remaneing oyle and Dip Tow in it and apply to the canker and for a plaster you must take the yolks of 2 eggs Burnt allum ʒi Boal armonick ʒi Bay salt ʒss Bruise all to a fine powder and mix up with 3 youlks of Eggs and apply in form of a plaster to the fore every 3 day give a portion of apsom Salts to cool the heet of the Blood this alwaife carry of a cankers humor if Timely applyd the parson must make their Constant Drink



DR. JOHN CLARK.

A Boston Physician from 1650 to 1664.

The First of Seven Generations of Medical Men of Boston.

Canfer Roote Tea and Dinelybit (?) Tea Wee may att fartin times apply a Tode cutt in two to the wound 2 or 3 times a week the nature of y^e tode is fuch y^t it will draw out the sharp hot canferous and pysonous and if you profed in this matter you may cure any canfer in a week or two.

For all sortes of agewes J have of late tryed the following magneticall experiment wth infallible succeffe. Pare the patients nayles when the fitt is coming on : and put the paringes into a little bagge of fine linon or farfenet : and tye that about a live eele's neck, in a tubbe of water. The eele will dye, and the patient will recover. And if a dog or hog eate that eele they will also dye. I have knowne (and now it is famous) in these parts a barke of a tree that infallibly cureth all intermittent feauvours. It cometh from Peru : and is the barke of a tree called by the Spaniards Kinkinia : the patient muft take 2 drammes of it in subtile powder : infufe it all night in white wine and drinke all (both powder and wine) when you feele the fitt approaching. It worketh no sensible effect, but that you are cured. . . . J have knowne one that cured all deliriums and frenfies whatsoever and at once taking, wth an elixir made of dew, nothing but dew, purified and nipped up in a glaffe, and digefted 15 months, till all of it became a gray powder, not one droppe of humidity remaining. This J know to be true ; and that firft it was as blacke as Inke ; then greene ; then gray ; and at 22 months end it was as white as any orientall perle. But it cured manias at 15 months end.*

* Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections.

All of which shows us at this time that our fathers knew or realized very imperfectly our stronghold of to-day in the treatment of disease, the reparative power of Nature. It leads us to coincide with Dr. Holmes, who would have turned much of the medicine into the ocean, which would have been better for the patients and worse for the fishes.

There seem to have been periods of great sickness noted from time to time by the annalists or the diarists of those days. You will all recall the fatality which attended the advent of the Pilgrims in 1620, when it is said fifty per cent. of the original company of the Mayflower succumbed to disease in the first year ; and can we wonder that their delicate English constitutions, enfeebled by a long and tempestuous voyage, yielded to the hardships, the starvation, the monotony and the home-sickness? If you doubt it, go to Burial Hill in Plymouth—lay aside all the evidences of the modern civilization you will see there—and go back, in mind, to the cheerless wilderness our forefathers found.

John Eliot, pastor of the First Church in Roxbury,* after relation of sundry cases of accident, which would be more interesting in their ghastliness to our medical than our lay readers, says in 1646 :—

This winter we had much sickneffe at Roxbury & greater mortality than euer we had afore, in fo short a time, 5 dyed

* Rec. Com., VI : 187.

in 8 days and more followed as appeareth in y^e record thereof.

And again in 1647 :—

From that time forward a great sicknesse epidemical did the Lord lay vpon vs so y^t the greatest p^t of a towne was sick at one, whole familys sick young & old, scarce any escaping, English or Indian. . . . The manner of the Sicknesse was a very depe cold, wth some tincture of a feaver & full of malignity & very dangerous if not well regarded, by keeping a low diet; the body folluble, warme, sweating, &c; at w^{ch} time of visitation, blefs M^{rs} Winthrop the Govno^{rs} wife dyed. Also a lusty strong woman of Boston, M^{rs} Stodder; fondly eat greene peaches, w^{ch} fet her to so violent a vomitting as it burst her intrails, as its thought and so she dyed.

He continues :—

God's rods are teaching. Or epidemical sicknesse of colds doth rightly by a divine hand tell the churches what or epidemical spir^l [spiritual] disease is. Lord help us to see it. to have such colds in the height of the heate of summer shews vs y^t in the height of the means of grace, peace, liberty of ordinances &c yet may we then fall into malignant & mortal colds, apostacys and coolings &c. This visitation of God was exceeding strange, it was so suddaine & generall; as if the Lord had immediatly sent forth an angel, not wth a sword to kill, but wth a rod to chastise; & he smot all, good & bad, old & young, or as if there were a general infection of the aer; w^{ch} went from North to South by degrees infecting all, yea such as were on the seas neere our coasts were so infected

& smitten: And this is remarkable y^t though few dyed yet some did; and generally those y^t dyed were of o^r choicest flowers & most p^recious faints among othrs. y^t were then taken to rest was y^t worthy & blessed light Mr. Hooker who haveing a cold and p^rched twice on the Sab: and ministred both the Sac: the L^ds Supper in the forenoone & Baptism in the afternoone, he was so over spent & his spirits sank y^t he could never recover them againe

The sickness noted would seem to be that which we to-day know as Epidemic Influenza, to which the popular name *La Grippe* has been assigned; or it may have been similar to that which prevailed at Plymouth, of which Morton says:—"It was a kind of pestilential fever," of which upwards of twenty persons died in Plymouth, and that it was also very fatal to the Indians in the vicinity. Drake tells us that in 1633 "a great mortality occurred among the Indians by the small-pox, whereof Chickatawbut, Sachem of Neponset, dyed"; and that again in 1636 the General Court met at Roxbury, having adjourned from Cambridge on account of the small-pox.

Edward Johnson, writing in his "Wonder-working Providence" in 1654, says:—

Here the Reader may take notice of the sad hand of the Lord against two persons, who were taken in a storme of snow, as they were passing from *Boston* to *Roxbury*, it being much about a mile distant, and a very plaine way. One of *Roxbury*

fending to *Boston* his fervant maid for a Barber-Chirurgion, to draw his tooth, they lost their way in their passage between, and were not found till many dayes after, and then the maid was found in one place, and the man in another, both of them frozen to death.*

The man was William Dinely, and his son, born soon after, was christened Fathergone Dinely. William Dinely was a barber-surgeon, and combined with this vocation the art of drawing teeth. He was a favorer of the doctrines, then considered heretical, of Mrs. Ann Hutchinson.

Indeed, the records of our old-time clergymen seem but constant iterations of the local disasters which afflicted our early inhabitants. Rev. Samuel Danforth is particularly fruitful in his narratives of these disasters:—"Old goody Bird of Dorchester," he says, "falling down at a trap-door in her owne house broke her neck and never spake more, but two days after died;" and four days later, "Daniel Holbrooke, going over a stone wall, fell down upon the stones and y^e knife in his pocket pierced his boweles and two days after he died." And in 1672, "Agues and fevers prevailed among us about y^e Bay, and fluxes and vomiting at Boston. The spotted feaver at and about Wenham;"—a streak of sunlight occasionally appearing such as when "Ester

* Wonder-working Providence, II : xv.

Grosvenor was reconciled to y^e church and solemmley owned y^e covenant."

In the Court of Assistants, March 4, 1631, it was Ordered that a Nicholas Knopp "be fined 5*l*. for taking upon him to cure the scurvy by a water of no value, which he sold at a very dear rate; to be imprifoned till he pay his fine or give security for it; or else be whipt. And shall be liable to any man's action of whom he has received money for said water." *

It is an interesting fact in the history of irregular practice, though at a much later period, to note that a house in West Roxbury, which was built about the year 1800 by John Whiting, afterward the home of Theodore Parker, was bought in 1818 by a person who signed himself "J. Sylvan, the rain water Dr., Enemy of human diseases." "And," as the writer says in speaking of him, "whose stay was necessarily brief in a community not tolerant of quacks." A strange interchange indeed, where Parker later drew around him the highest thinkers of New England, and in his study or his barn, as it is related, or on his lawn, held those Olympics for the discussion of Goethe or Fourier, the latest form of infidelity, all cosmic questions, and Emerson's last lecture.†

In looking over the History of Brooklyn I found an account of another man who appeared there in 1810-11;

* General Court Records, I: 67.

† Drake, Roxbury: 451.

he was a German who landed in Philadelphia and came to Brooklyn, where he remained about a year, occupying a house called the Black Hawk Tavern; in 1812 he removed to Providence, R. I., where he had a large practice; thence to East Hartford, Conn., but returned to Providence, and died there in 1814-15. He was, by one account, an educated physician, honest, skillful, extremely eccentric, and noted for his many deeds of charity. He used herbs and simple remedies, especially advising the use of rain-water as a drink. "At the culmination of his practice in Roxbury, near Boston," says one who remembered him, "I have seen long lines of chaises and other vehicles on the side of the road near his residence, at the 'Punch bowl,' in Roxbury [Brookline], waiting patiently hours for their turn at the levee of the consummate charlatan. His specific for all maladies was rain-water in which herbs and roots had been stewed. This unsavory decoction he made his patients swallow by the quart at a time, repeating the potation several times a day; and he prohibited salt in food." *

He too called himself "Sylvan Gardener, enemy of human diseases," and published a "Formula of Prescription" to which he prefixed "A Vindication concerning the Dietetical Abstinence, detected the dangerous tendency of several articles . . . tobacco, salted food, etc.," and another of similar character, "Prescription for

* Hist. Mag., VI: 71.

Chronical Diseases, etc.” Both are said to have been “as worthless and frequently unintelligible in matter as they were ridiculous and laughable in style.” He offered to “supply applicants with prescriptions at four cents, and the indigent received them gratis.”* If not identical with the “Sylvan” above, he had his imitators — Dr. Octavius Plinth, who flourished about the year 1817,† and Dr. C. Humbert, who by one account died in the vicinity of Philadelphia, June 10, 1825, at the supposed age of one hundred years.‡

That midwives were frequently if not commonly employed, is seen from the records of Roxbury, where, under date of 9 November, 1642, “there were two infants dyed in the birth, it was conceded to be through

* Hist. Mag., VI: 131.

† The accounts of these two empirics are somewhat conflicting. One correspondent of the *Historical Magazine* (V: 350) says that the true name of the Sylvan first mentioned was Octavius Plinth; that for East Hartford we should read East Haddam, and that he was drowned in 1815, in a large barrel of rain-water, which stood under the eaves of his house! while another, from whom we have quoted above, says (*Ibid.*, VI: 70), that he was living in Roxbury in 1817, remarks “there have been two impostors of the name of Rain Water Doctor, or else this arrant quack succeeded in humbugging the public several years after he appropriately drowned himself in rain-water of his own collecting!” By a note from J. M. Fullerlye (*Ibid.*, p. 102), “Octavius Plinth, M. D.,” was the eighth son of Mahlon Plinth, of Randolph, Mass., and the epitaph on his tomb at North Dedham, Mass., says, “His goodness surpassed most of his fellow men, and his home is in heaven.” There would seem to have been several who used the title.

‡ See an account of a “Rain-water Doctor,” apparently identical with this Dr. C. Humbert, in Hist. Mag., VI: 294, which has a long epitaph on one of his patients, which Humbert is said to have composed.

the unskillfulness of the midwife; none of the p'ents [parents] were of o' church."* And again: "3 Nov., 5 day, 1644," when the wife of Mr. Bowen of Boston Church was "delivered of a ch. by Gods mercy, wthout the help of any other woman, God himself helping his pore servants in a straight."† Which reminds us of the good people of Connecticut who, in their earliest days, voted that they would be governed by the laws of God — until the General Court should meet and make better.

It was not until the advent of Dr. James Lloyd,‡ as late as 1753, that the inhabitants of Boston could avail themselves of a systematic practitioner of midwifery. He was born at Oyster Bay, L. I., in 1728, and died in 1810. He had enjoyed the instructions of Warren, Sharp, and Hunter of London, and, in the following year, settled in Boston.§ Davenport|| says:—"Feb. 6, 1705, died the Widow Wyat, aged 94: having as a midwife assisted at the birth of one thousand one hundred and more children."

Ruth Barnaby was a noted midwife of Boston, who practiced her calling in our town for more than forty years, and died at the age of 101. During the epidemic

* Rec. Com. VI: 170.

† *Ibid.*, VI: 115.

‡ Beck, Historical Sketch, 1850.

§ See also Massachusetts Medical Society Med. Com., II: 244, and Mem. History of Boston, 454.

|| The Sexton's Monitor, and Dorchester Cemetery Memorial, 16.

of small-pox in 1764, she insisted on being inoculated, and thus escaped the disease in the natural way, although several members of her family contracted it.*

Nor was the subject of abdominal surgery neglected. John Eliot again says: — "1674, 25th, 10th mo., being defired, I went to watertowne to be p^resent at the cuting of b. [Brother] livermore's daughter of a wonderfull great timpany: the op^ration succeeded at the p^resent bleffed be the Lord." However, on the 28th of the same month, he says, "The above named woman cut of timpany, the next day dyed."

A thousand anecdotes might be detailed about the members of the medical profession, many of them happily pointing to the higher traits of character; traits which, as we consider the ideal physician, make him the nearest and best friend to the family in the scenes of joy and of sorrow, — his footstep long waited for upon the stairs, his face a benediction. The shadows gather too closely around the practitioners of two hundred and fifty years ago for us to recognize thoroughly their characters and their daily lives; but we have had the descendants of those very men within the present century, and we may well believe that their characters do not materially differ from those of their forbears.

It is pleasantly and jocosely told of Dr. Thomas Williams, who was born in Roxbury in 1736 (Harvard

* Toner.

1757), and died in 1815, after a life of remarkable industry, temperance and activity, that he was a remarkably courteous man, but somewhat near-sighted. As he passed from one part of the town to the other, mounted on his large white horse, he would bow to every window he passed, so as to avoid giving offence to anyone,—which recalls the incident related of one of our own century, that he one day picked up in his chaise some brother physician, and, busily engaged in conversation, would supplement his frequent bows with “That is one of my patients.” Presently came along a lady who received the same salutation, and the same remark followed. “Yes,” said his brother, “quite true; the lady was your wife.”

With this review of the condition of medicine in the earliest days of New England,—with all the crudities of practice, with the drawbacks which our ancestors were forced to endure,—the medical men of the period, without doubt, formed a class which ranked among the first in the community. There came to the surface, in the brief records we have of the earlier physicians, evidences of strong character, of benevolence, patriotism, piety and Christian lives, which have not been surpassed in later years. Let me rehearse, briefly, some of the records gleaned from manuscript memoirs gathered through many years, and there my paper will end.

Samuel Fuller, you know, came over in the Mayflower, and was the medical attendant of the Pilgrims.

Freeman* says he was deacon in the Plymouth Church ; a skillful physician and distinguished for his piety ; he died in 1633. He extended his benevolent labors not only to the sick among his immediate friends at Plymouth and the aborigines in the vicinity, but in 1628/9, by the desire of Governor Endicott, he twice visited the settlement at Salem, where he manifested his skill and success in practice among the numerous sufferers under scurvy and other diseases.† Among those present at the gloomy period following the arrival of Winthrop at Charlestown, he was in attendance, offering his sympathy and such aid as he could with medicines.

In the burying-ground at Concord is the gravestone of James Minot (Harvard 1675) ; the epitaph tells his story : —

Here is interred the remains of JAMES MINOT, ESQ., A. M., an excellent grammarian, enriched with the gift of prayer and preaching, a commanding officer, a physician of great value, a great lover of peace, as well as of justice, and, which was his greatest glory, a gentⁿ of distinguished virtue and goodness, happy in a virtuous posterity and, living religiously, died comfortably Sep. 20. 1735.

In 1696 a French privateer, fitted out, perhaps, at Bordeaux, and cruising on the American coast, was wrecked in Buzzard's Bay ; the crew were taken prisoners and sent under guard to Boston. On board this

* History, II : 485. † Frothingham, History of Charlestown, 43.

vessel was Dr. Francis Le Baron, a skillful physician and surgeon, whose liberation was asked by the inhabitants of Plymouth, that he might practice his profession in that town. From him were descended those of the name in Plymouth and elsewhere. He died August 8, 1704, and his gravestone can be seen on Burial Hill. Read his story as told in fiction under the title "A Nameless Nobleman," by Mrs. Mary J. Austin.

Dr. Charles Chauncy, a distinguished scholar, a respectable physician and an eminent divine, came from England in the year 1638 and lived in Plymouth and Scituate. Besides performing his ministerial labors, he practiced to a considerable extent, from which Mather infers he was eminently qualified.† In 1654 he was chosen President of Harvard College, and died Feb. 19, 1672. His six sons were said by Mather to have been eminent physicians; several of them returned to England and did not come back.

Leonard Hoar (Harvard 1650), Chauncy's successor as President of Harvard College from 1672 to his death, March 15, 1675, was a distinguished scholar and physician, with a degree in medicine from Cambridge, in England, in 1671.

Thomas Scottow, who graduated at Harvard in 1677, in his will calls himself a "chirurgion." He lived for

* There are various versions of his life-history, for which see the Le Baron Genealogy, pp. 442 *et seq.* All agree as to his surgical skill.

† N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg. x : 118; Sewall, 1825 : 49; Farmer.

a time in Scarborough, where he was captain of the garrison and a magistrate. A letter of his, calling for reinforcements against the Indians, September 26, 1689, is in the Massachusetts Archives.*

You will recall that Dr. Elisha Cooke (who married the daughter of Governor Leverett), born in Boston 1637 (Harvard 1657), died October 31, 1715, was a delegate to the General Court and Speaker; Assistant in 1684, '85 and '86; one of the Council of Safety, 1689; agent to England for the Colony, 1690-1.

Isaac Addington, who lived in what was called Half Square Court, near what is now the corner of State and Devonshire streets, was Secretary of the Province before the arrival of the new Charter; he was opposed to Andros, and among the signers of the petition to him in 1686, when a demand was made on him to deliver up the Government of the Colony.

Dr. Thaddeus Mason Harris† tells us that John Glover (Harvard 1650), son of John Glover of Dorchester, bequeathed a sum of money for the support of scholars at college. He was a physician of Roxbury, and received the degree of doctor at Aberdeen in 1654.

George Alcock, the ancestor of the Alcotts of Concord, lived on Bartlett street, in Roxbury. The Church Record says of him‡: — "He was with the first com-

* History of Old South Church, I: 116.

† Massachusetts Historical Society, I, ix: 180.

‡ Drake, Roxbury, 363.

pany in 1630 ; . . . when the people of Rockfborough joyned to the church at Dorchefter (until such time as God should give them opportunity to be a church among themselves) he was by the church chosen a Deakon especially to regard the brethren at Rockfborough, and after he adjoined himself to this church at Rockfborough he was ordained a Deakon of this church. . . . He lived in a good and godly fort and dyed in the end of the 10th month 1640, and left a good favour behind him the poor of the church much bewailing his los.

In the Roxbury Church Records, under date of November 27, 1665, Mr. Danforth, the Minister, writes :—
“Mrs. Sarah Alcock dyed, a vertuous woman, of vn stained life, very skilful in phyfick and chirurgery, exceeding active, yea vnwearied in ministering to y^e necessities of others. Her workes precede her in y^e gates.” In the next paragraph her husband, John, son of George, is mentioned. He was also a physician, graduated at Harvard College in 1646, and died March 29, 1667. Sarah was a daughter of Richard Palgrave, the first physician of Charlestown, who came with Winthrop in the Arbella.

With these words I have striven to call up to your minds some of the men, the manners, and the social conditions of the seventeenth century. There comes up to our notice a long procession of those sturdy, hard-headed, strong-minded, intelligent workers in the medical profession in the time of our forefathers. Their

shadows from the fitful firelight flit upon our study walls. We think of those early days when there was never a clearing made that did not let in the light upon heroes and heroines ; we see the old doctors threading their way through the narrow streets in Boston town, or plodding along on the old mare over the country paths, with their saddle-bags pregnant with calomel and jalap, blue pill, senna and salts. How strangely the hard-lined faces, the quaint homespun garb, the Puritan hat, doublet and short-clothes, jostle with the surroundings of the modern doctor of to-day ! But the diamond was there in their natures, albeit it was concealed, as in the Kimberly mines, by a matrix of homely surroundings. We are stronger for their strength, invigorated by their very trials. Let us thank God for their lives ; let us learn from their experience, and so, by looking backward to their forms, be the better able to look forward.



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IN THE EXCHANGE COFFEE HOUSE
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IN THE EXCHANGE COFFEE HOUSE, 1810

LISTS OF SUBSCRIBERS FROM THE SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS.

“ Then Commerce brought into the public walk
The busy merchant; the big warehouse built;
Then, too, the pillar'd dome, magnifick, heav'd
Its ample roof. . . . ”



HE Exchange Coffee House, in which the Reading Room and Marine Diary were located, was, during its brief existence, one of the landmarks of the town of Boston, and was when erected the most capacious building and the most extensive establishment of its kind in the United States. The architect was Charles Bulfinch.

It was situated on Congress Street near State Street, and was built of stone, marble and brick, and ornamented by the three orders of architecture ; it was seven stories in height and was in fact a sky-scraper of its day.

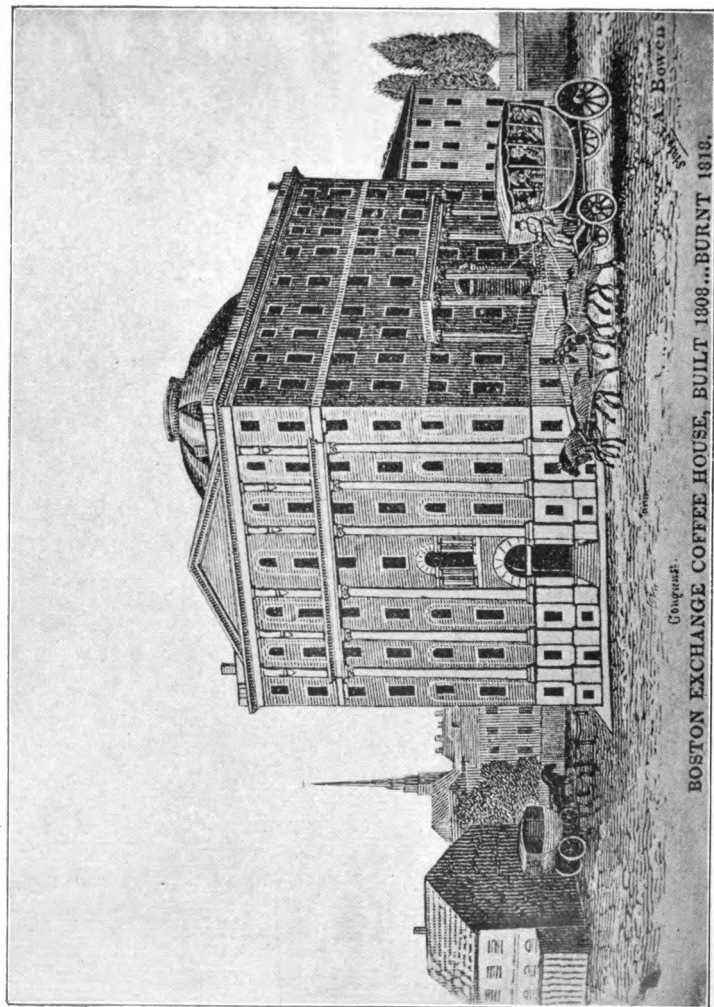
In the centre of the building, which was devoted to public, mercantile and hotel purposes, was a rectangular area open to the roof and surmounted by a dome, the top of which was eighty feet from the floor. Two hundred and ten apartments of various sizes were grouped around the central area, and among them were a dining hall on the second floor capable of seating three hundred persons, a ball room and a Masonic hall.

In the public Reading Room on the entrance floor were kept journals of the important events of the day, both political and commercial, and in addition to the merchants who frequented it, patrons of the Coffee House were allowed to consult the files.

The Exchange Coffee House was finished in 1808, two years and a half being occupied in its erection, and its building was the cause of financial ruin to many residents of Boston. It cost the projector of the enterprise, and those associated with him, more than half a million of dollars, and he failed before the building was finished. It was completed by others and used for the purposes named above until 1818, when, on November 3, it was totally destroyed by fire.*

The "Reading Room and Marine Diary" was sustained by subscriptions. Among the documents relating to our local history in the collections of the Bostonian

* For a further account of the Exchange Coffee House, see Snow's "History of Boston and Ominum Gatherum," November, 1809.



Society are two lists of subscribers, 1810-11, with the original signatures of Boston merchants of that period, which are printed below: some, evidently written in haste, are difficult to decipher, and a few, illegible, are omitted. But the lists are of interest as showing many familiar names of the "Solid men of Boston" a century ago.

SUBSCRIPTION BOOK.

To maintain the Marine Diary in future, as correctly & diligently as it has been for the past, at the Exchange Coffee House, it is found necessary to raise a Subscription for that purpose.

Those who subscribe \$10, for one year commencing the 2^d of July, 1810, will have the privilege of posting up a new advertisement every day on the columns of the area, which will be fitted up for that purpose. Also the reading of all the most popular newspapers printed in the United States — Also Letter Bags for receiving Letters for Europe, the West Indies & Nova Scotia — & a Room appropriated, with a Telescope Glass, to keep a look out for all Vessels coming up the harbour. — Together with such other improvements as the publick patronage will afford.

Those who subscribe \$5, will have all the privilege mentioned above excepting the posting of advertisements. The present Subscribers to the Reading Room are embraced in this article, until their time expires.

We the Subscribers, promise to pay the Treasurer of the Exchange Coffee House, in 6 months from this date, the several sums affixed to our names, provided the foregoing conditions are put into complete operation. Subscription to be for one year, from July 2, 1810, to July 2, 1811.

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